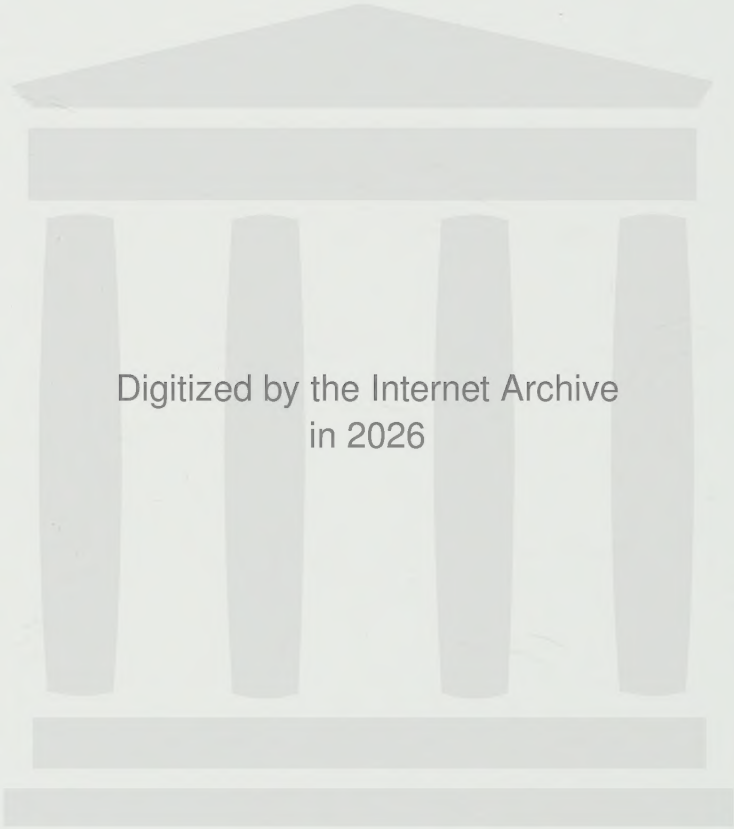
Santa Clara Review

since 1869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This issue of *santa clara review* proudly features cover art by Beverly Rayner.

Gene Pool Repository, 2006
wooden cabinet, vintage photographs, plexiglas, paint

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DEVOTED TO

MENTAL IMPROVEMENT

"when several young gentlemen of the College [decided to] publish a journal, their object was stated to be mental improvement and to evince that improvement in their endeavors"

–Chas. F. Wilcox, Editor (1869)

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letter from the editor

This issue, like every other, is built with words and images. Recently, however, it was a number that caught my attention. The number of pieces we happened to send to the printer at publishing time—thirty-six—was one I found strangely appropriate.

An ancient belief from the Talmud states that within every generation there are thirty-six *Lamed Vav Tzadikim*, thirty-six righteous people on earth, whose role it is to justify the purpose of humankind to the divine. Individually, the thirty-six writers and artists displayed within the pages of this journal may not be able to substantiate the significance and goodness of the human race, but together they exemplify the depth of soul of which we are capable.

They capture that worth by creating it. With brush, pen and camera, they confine aspects of life, arrest them and throw them on canvas, splash them on the page, and thrust them before the lens.

Artists capture the elements of life that so many of us cannot. Each of the thirty-six individuals whose work is displayed within this issue were able to trap one of these fleeting shadows of human inspiration and deliver it to us beautifully. *Santa Clara Review* is proud to be the source delivering them to you.

To the entire staff of Volume 98—it is your passion that made it possible. As a staff, we especially want to thank the artist Beverly Rayner for her illuminating interview, for allowing us to publish her work, *Accretion*, and for contributing our cover, the fascinating *Gene Pool Repository*.

Thirty-six experiences await.

Enjoy,

Joshua Fredkin
and the *Santa Clara Review* editors

Intercessions

My window slides between me
and the light, which stands between
the window and the tree. Lamplight

illuminates the undersides
of insects, and leafless twigs
like blackened cobwebs

are etched into the night.
Across the way: another window.
Something is always obscured.

For what surrounds the lamps
with nimbuses, but scratches on the glass?
Listen, Someone is playing the guitar.

Deadlines

He was young, he was angry and he wanted to hit me.

"Good God, sir, how would you like it if you were lying there and somebody was trying to take your picture?"

He glowered with self-righteousness, looking for an excuse, any excuse to propel his sense of decency into my face.

I spoke without thinking, a major faux pas in my line of work. I didn't care. It was late. I wanted to go home.

"Look," I said, "this is what I do for a living. I have to do it every day. Sometimes, I forget."

It worked. I don't know why. Perhaps it's just hard to hit a tired man. I hadn't tried to sound burned-out. Maybe I didn't have to. In any case, he moved aside, sort of, but he kept on glaring.

Not that it particularly mattered in the larger scheme of things -- or in the smaller scheme of things, for that matter. The kid was dead, even if nobody wanted to admit it. He had crashed his motorcycle into the side of a truck at 35 m.p.h. He was driving along and simply didn't see it, that's all. Nobody's fault. It happens sometimes.

Besides, the inside of the aid car was too dark for my camera to pick up anything. Whether that constitutes the larger or smaller scheme of things, in comparison with the kid's death -- just another death, one of scores like it that week, hundreds like it that month, thousands like it that year, tens of thousands like it. . . *who cares*! -- I'll let you ponder with appropriate gravitas. I had a six o'clock deadline.

The medics pumped the kid's chest and shot him full of adrenalin and one of them fainted from the heat in the cramped aid car. The thing I noticed, though, were his hands. For a moment, I wanted to take one of those hands and feel its warmth and say,

"It's okay. You don't know it, but they are trying. They are trying harder than you can possibly know, but it's all against them. In the next two of three minutes, they will realize that and they hate themselves for it. But now, they are giving you everything they have."

Then I caught myself. Next week, probably sooner, there would be another one and I would shoot my photos and write my story; different names, different places, same results. I would always be employed.

I chased ambulances for about six years, give or take, and I never got entirely used to it. I did get very good at it. And I did do it for six years, a long time by the standards of the trade. So it must have registered something in whatever passes for one's soul.

Some say newspapers shouldn't print photos of demolished cars and murder scenes and dead bodies and the like. They only appeal to people who get some kind of sick kick out if it, so the thinking goes.

Bullshit.

Everybody looks. It's a special form of curiosity and we are uncomfortable with its dark, unknowable hold on us. Maybe that's why the young medic was ready to deck me. I was exhibiting that twisted little cranny of human nature and I was doing it right out in the open, camera flashing, notebook at the ready, infiltrating that medieval part of his mind. But it's a medieval part of my mind, too. Maybe I should have explained that to him. But it wasn't worth a punch in the face.

"Beautiful morning, eh?" the cop said as he sipped his coffee. Nearby, a woman with a bullet through her head lay on a pile of bright autumn leaves. She had tried to impede her husband's love life. This had displeased him.

She had been dead for a few hours, maybe a day. The odd thing is, after a while they often don't look like individuals anymore. Their faces blur and become indistinct. Probably because the muscles relax or the fluids drain from the cells or some such thing. The result is, they all look pretty much the same. The cop offered

me some coffee. It was hot and strong; the perfect complement to the clean, clear morning air. Life was good.

Once I went on an accident call and by the time I got there, everyone was gone. When I got back, I told my editor I had no pictures because all that was left was a pile of bloody bandages. He said, "Hmmm, maybe you could have shot that, kind of an artsy-craftsy thing with a wide angle lens, you know?" Good point. We both nodded and thought it over for a moment. Then we laughed. It's just another thing to photograph and write about; another thing to fill space on a news page; ink on paper, no different in its effect on the detached, churning machine that is daily journalism than the latest dispatch from the PTA.

"Guess he'll have to sit out his senior prom," a Marine said to me about a Vietnamese teenager propped against a wall, his legs blown off at the knees. Or, "Catch one. Fishing season opens next week." A cop said that about a swarm of flies hovering around a drug dealer curled in a mud puddle, six .45 caliber holes perforating various parts of his anatomy, Fearless Fosdick, man. I laughed. I'd laugh again. It is funny. Some of us just aren't ashamed to admit it.

The living are different matter. The girl lay on the grit and slush of a particularly scabrous patch of south Seattle, her leg twisted under her crazily. She was 16 and looked 40.

The medics prodded her chest and her stomach as gently as they could, but she began to cry.

And when she did, something in me moved. Not something emotional or spiritual, but something physical. Really. My skin stood still but my *bones* seem to move. I floated. I actually thought I might float away.

For, you see, she made the same sound a woman makes in the act of love.

Sounds of love, sounds of pain, no sounds at all except the soft squeak, squeak, squeak their chests make when the medics pump them. The sounds twist their way into your mind and there

they stay, coming forth sometimes when you try to sleep or try to love. So do the scenes; scenes of moving hands and limp hands; the peaceful eyes of a sleeping child, the peaceful eyes of a child ten minutes dead. And they haunt you, haunt you in places deep and close to your spine, because if you think about it, if for a moment you can't not think about it, you know, oh how you know, that *they aren't much different than you.*

Eventually, they got her in the ambulance, that little girl with the wide, frightened eyes, and they hauled her away. I would never see her again or know of her again. She was not important enough for the newspaper to expend the resources necessary of a follow-up story. A photo of the publisher receiving a plaque from the downtown Rotary club had more value, in the judgment of people who decide such things; the people who view the world from air conditioned offices, the people who speak in confident platitudes at morning editorial meetings, the smug people, the comfortable people, the people who, after a few years, I came to hate. But by that time, I also realized I had come to love something with just as much fervor: The street. The street; its terror, its torment, its death, and with it all the agape that the next breath you take will be the sweetest one you ever have taken. Yes, I loved it. God forgive me, for truly I did.

Nearby, a tall, handsome cop, the kind you see in movies but never in real life, so angular and spare and razor-creased I wondered if he was a mirage; he stood there, chewing gum and staring at the torn clothes and broken glass and bloody bandages. Then he started talking. His head was down so I couldn't quite hear him and I couldn't tell if he was talking to me or just talking because he couldn't keep his thoughts inside.

After a while, he looked up at the flat, soot-laden sky.

"Jesus," he said. "This line of work sucks."

I'm still not sure who he was talking to.

Unmentionables

She rifles through piles of $25 panties
colored like party favors
in search of secrets of women
with names like Victoria
she knows she'll never hear.

Slipping into an open
room, too shy to
ask for the key,
that lacy triangle
over her Mervyn's brand
elastic band,
her little girl's briefs,
frayed from thighs rubbing
beneath basketball shorts,
between jump ropes.

Reflections in fluorescent light
reveal each freckle and bruise.
The bristle of sunshine blonde
leg hair and goosebumps.
The lack of hips.
The seamless grace
of slight breasts.
Lost, in dangling fabric.
Is this the beauty of her sex?

She walks, with caution,
through the exit,
to test if it detects,
if it can see the difference.
Bandy legged confidence
of thirteen years
that think they hear those
secrets that will never be clear.

Mrs. Van Allen Addresses the Babysitter

I've left the number where I'll be on this card, Milo. Genie and Frank Weber live on 91st between 3rd and Lexington. Just dinner and cocktails tonight, so I should be home by ten at the latest.

This is the number for Doctor Polk's answering service. If it's a dire emergency and you can't reach me or Doctor Polk, then call an ambulance, but otherwise, what's the order?

Good. Now that you're an exalted teenager, I know you're capable of anything.

If Anne wakes you can take her a glass of milk. Winnie may ask for a Milk Bone. Milk Bones are here, in this. Oh my! Pardon the mess. It's been utter chaos since we got home from the Cape.

Questions? No? You'll do fine, I know it.

* * *

Thank you for coming early this evening. My friend Malcolm insisted we have dinner before the opera.

In case you get hungry, let me show you, here, in the fridge, there's some cantaloupe. Do you like cantaloupe? Over here is a lamb chop with mashed potatoes. And for dessert, lurking underneath the foil, is a piece of blueberry pie. My friend Margaret carried back six crates from Maine. Wasn't that kind of her?

Plates are here, silverware, over here. Napkins, ah, where are the napkins? Here. When you're done, you can rinse everything and put it in the dishwasher. I'll pour in detergent, like so, and all you have to do is push the button, like so.

Why don't you come into the living room for a moment and make yourself comfortable. Let me open the shades. There. That's

better. Marvelous sunset.

Let's rest our feet, shall we? I have a few minutes before Malcolm arrives.

You can try out my new silver nutcracker. I realize this is the 70's, not the 40's, but I couldn't resist. That's it. Bravo! Would you mind passing me the ashtray, Milo?

I love autumn. I love it because it's the start of everything. The men have gotten new suits, the women are wearing new outfits. And the symphony, the opera, all of the arts are getting underway, the air is crisp, everyone's walking a little faster.

What are you—oh, for heaven's sake, cufflinks! Those must be Malcolm's. Hand them over and I'll return them to their rightful owner. Let's see. M.S.H. Malcolm S. Holmes. Stephen. Sterling. Sherlock. Hah! Malcolm Sherlock Holmes, do you think that could be it?

I'll put them in my purse for safekeeping. There.

The irony is that Malcolm probably *would* have been better off as Sherlock Holmes. He was mad about forensics, crime scenes, anything to do with police work. Malcolm and my ex-husband were college roommates, you see. Henry encouraged Malcolm to be a police detective, but his family wouldn't hear of it. They insisted he turn himself into a respectable lawyer.

Lately Malcolm's become so serious. The system at these firms is that you work and work and work like a little beaver for seven years, and then one day they tell you whether they like you. If they like you, then you get to stay. If not, then you can stay, but it's not done. Poor Malcolm has started reading things into every little gesture. I hope he doesn't have a nervous breakdown.

* * *

Anne has a cough, poor thing. We got stuck in the rain last week without an umbrella. Then the cold snap. Mommy's fault. Now mommy's feeling guilty.

Why don't you come upstairs while I take a peek. Mind the banister. That's another item that needs fixing. Henry used to take care of all that. You can follow me. It's all right. Tiptoe. Shhh.

Still feverish. I'll take her temperature in the morning. Let me show you where I keep the medicine. Here's Anne's bathroom. Here's the medicine cabinet. One capful. Oof, childproof caps! Adult-proof, if they were completely honest with themselves. I'll leave it open with the lid on like this, just fill the cap and give it to her.

Good.

I need to grab something out of the study. Hang on a moment.

Have you seen Henry's study? Come, take a look. Over here is where he used to work on his sailboats. Let me turn on a light so you can see. This contraption is a French curve. What you're supposed to do is lay down a bunch of dots like you can see Henry did, and connect them with the French curve. Voilá! It's all a game of connect-the-dots when you get down to it.

I should get rid of this drafting table, but it's very decorative. Henry said I should keep it. I'm not a fan of living museums, but there it is.

He used to get me so excited about his boats. You raise the sail, grasp the tiller, and you do have a wonderful sense of freedom out on the open water. That's a picture of me on *Claribelle* imitating Jacqueline Kennedy. Don't I look glamorous in my Polaroids?

Malcolm came with us once. We threw out the anchor, and he had a marvelous time diving off the bow. Like a puppy. Then he began seeing, what was her name? Rita. Rita something. She was afraid of open water. And that, young man, was that.

* * *

I hear you've begun lobbying your mother to stop smoking. Good luck. We all started in college and don't seem to be able to

give it up, do we? You're absolutely right, though; we should quit. Can you pass the ashtray, dear?

You should hear Malcolm lecturing me. He's become a regular apostle since he stopped smoking. He's playing squash, jogging around the reservoir. I wonder what's gotten into him.

Between you and me, sometimes I think Malcolm and I are not that well suited to each other. He's become very didactic. That was never Henry's problem. With Henry it was like prying open an oyster. It became. Well, it was frustrating.

* * *

Your mother and I are officially agreeing to disagree about politics.

I don't mean to imply she's a Kennedy-style limousine liberal, thank God, more like a well-intentioned, Hubert Humphrey kind of liberal. I'm a Republican, you see, even though my parents were Democrats. Most of my relatives are from Eastern Europe. I left all that behind when I married Henry.

Nowadays my political sensibilities are closest to William F. Buckley. Are you familiar with his work? He did a marvelous interview on *Firing Line* with Stokely Carmichael in which he absolutely laid bare the contradictions of the so-called Black Panther Movement.

I like Buckley because he's a Republican, but not one of those Goldwater fanatics. A sensible Republican. I suppose that's what I am, a sensible Republican.

Ah, that will be Malcolm calling. No doubt he's running late.

* * *

Go ahead, open it. Have you read Salinger? I hope your mother won't be scandalized. She doesn't seem like the type. Merry

Christmas.

There's a very nice man I want her to meet, by the way. A lawyer. Surprise.

Oh, hello, Winnie, sweet girl! What's a nice little Great Dane doing in an apartment like this? Are you done with your nap, sweet thing?

Speaking of naps, Milo, one thing I want to discuss is your habit of falling asleep on the job. I discussed this with your mother. It may mean we have to discontinue our little arrangement for a while. Please do try to stay awake while you're here. Winnie will make a racket in the front hall if someone tries to enter, but I would rather have a competent human being watching things. Are we in agreement?

* * *

I've put your lovely holiday card up here on the mantel. You needn't have gone to so much trouble. And from now on, I must insist that you not thank me for buying you books! You should think of it as an obligation on my part—older generation educating the younger generation, et cetera.

New Year's resolutions? No? You should. It's important that we resolve things. Now look at this stain on my blouse. Where did that come from?

My friend Ruth and I are going to the theatre tonight. Ruth is recently divorced, too. Just a moment. Quick trip.

God, I look like a wreck. In the end, what they all want is a snappy blonde in a snappy mini-skirt. Can you hand me the cigarette lighter, dear?

When you're older, Milo, you'll find that people do the strangest things. My friend Malcolm, whom I've told you about, said he wanted to stop seeing me this week. Imagine if your best friend from soccer said he didn't want to be on the team anymore. Wouldn't that be odd?

After Malcolm heard on Monday that his firm had decided not to make him partner, he began to act out, because for seven years he's done everything they wanted him to do: he shined his shoes, pressed his shirts, tied his bow ties. He's been a darling to everyone, even when they haven't been very nice to him in return. On Monday, poof! It was as if he had been expelled from school after seven years of perfect attendance.

Now he's begun to do some very childish things. He decided he would rather start spending more time with a woman who has been his secretary these last four years. Her name is Charlene LeClaire. Well.

I don't want to cast aspersions, but I will say that Charlene is not in Malcolm's league at all. Which isn't to say there aren't other redeeming qualities he may find in her. The apartment in Flatbush. He may also find her, I mean. Well.

Damn. There's the telephone. Hand me a tissue, will you, dear? Let me see who's calling.

Ruth's not feeling well. I suppose that's all right. Now I can stay home and wallow in self-pity. Much better than going out to a stupid old theatre production.

If you want to go home, please do. I'll pay you right now. For the whole evening. I would have been home at eleven o'clock, that's four hours, let's call it five.

On the other hand, if you want to stay a while, that would be fine too. Do you feel like staying? I'll pay you for the whole evening, regardless. You can tell your mother you stayed and listened to Mrs. Van Allen babble on about her little problems.

Are you sure you don't want something to eat, dear, or drink? Chocolate chip cookies? I have some ginger ale in the fridge. Excuse me, will you?

There. That's much better. Scotch on the rocks, stockinged feet. These shoes have been giving me fits. There was a nice little man at the corner of 97th and Madison who used to fix my shoes, but according to his daughter he's suffered a stroke. Now I have no

place to go. You can see where these shoes give me blisters on my toes.

Look at this run in my stocking. Up, up, behind the knee, up the thigh, oh my, so much for this pair! I'll keep my legs crossed so you won't notice, how's that?

At least I won't have to move for a while. That's right, I signed a new lease today. Have you ever seen a lease? Beastly document. Not as bad as divorce papers, but beastly nonetheless.

It was all so straightforward before Anne was born. Henry and I had a pied-à-terre—that's a kind of tiny apartment—on Bank Street in the Village. We had a darling little patio on the ground floor, not much space, but I fixed it up with roses and wisteria. Henry would come home from work and sit in the garden working on his blue-prints while I read. When it got dark we lit candles. It was a wonderful time to be in the Village.

Anne's birth was the happiest day of my life, as I'm sure your birth was for your mother, but things do change. Henry decided he wanted to move to the Sound. Locust Valley. He has a brother there, and an uncle named Richard. Richard's a complete drunk.

That was always Henry's style, you see, he'd sit there like an oyster for months, not saying a thing, and then he'd do something drastic.

I said we could get spacious digs uptown for not much money, and wasn't it premature to leave all the advantages of the city behind? And we did find a duplex, didn't we. But then Henry started working longer hours, and when he was home he holed himself up with his keels and his plumb lines. Not that we had time to go sailing. I was about to read him the riot act, but he beat me to it. I'm moving out, he said. You're being unreasonable about staying in the city. Common sense dictates, et cetera.

I said, goodness Henry, can't we talk about this? No, it wasn't something he wanted to discuss. I said, well, if you're not willing to negotiate, then it's not going to be much fun living together, is it.

Poof! No more Henry.

Now he comes to visit Anne once every two weeks, but I mean, we might as well be going to the butcher. Take a number, lady.

Now here we are: three girls, one duplex. Goodness grief.

That's all right, I've had enough refreshments for one evening. Thank you.

Can I ask you for one small favor, though? Would you mind coming over here and giving me a little hug? Is that all right? Would you mind, terribly?

There. That's wonderful. Thank you. You're very nice to sit here for ages listening to me. Now I think you should run home. It's getting late. Run along now.

* * *

You're an angel, Milo. My feet are forever in your debt! Let me give you a kiss.

After you talked to your mother, she sent me to Mr. Lim, and my life took a dramatic turn for the better. Hooray!

Something to eat? I saved you some delicious salmon. No? You can always have a bite later if you get the urge.

Ah, comfort. Soda for you, Scotch for me, what else could we possibly need?

Ruth's bringing along another divorcée tonight. Eileen Hurwitz. We're going to a piano recital. The way it developed was that Eileen wanted to see *The French Connection*, but of course I had to remind them that movies offend me as an art form. You've never heard me say that? Yes, my view is that if it's not live, it's not art, books being the exception.

It turns out this woman Eileen lives two blocks from where I grew up on West End Avenue. Have I told you about my upbringing? No?

Back then it was my sister and me and my parents, the four of us on the Upper West. That's where you moved in those

days. My father was an attorney, and the thing that caused him quite a lot of heartburn, I think, was the feeling that he was being discriminated against by other men in the firm. There was another Jewish fellow there who quit to form his own firm. Milton Sterns. Milton did spectacularly well, parenthetically.

My father wouldn't budge. He put his head down and kept at it for 25 years. Then, at a certain point, he set out on a crusade to make my sister and me acceptable to that crowd. Voice lessons. Dance lessons. Piano lessons. We were sent to Chez Nicole, that's a salon on the East Side where all the ladies get their hair done.

Now my sister's married to a Jewish man. Happy as a lark.

At the end of senior year in college, one of the girls in my dorm had a party on Cape Cod. In Osterville. Lanterns, jazz bands. We spent weeks preparing for it. That's where I met Henry. He was a high school chum of my roommate's brother. Henry and I talked and talked, and then we strolled down to the water and took off our shoes. We were both tipsy from the champagne.

Van Allen. Won't father be pleased, I thought. Well. He was delirious.

7:20! Oh, my goodness. They're probably waiting downstairs for me, wondering where I am. I'll tell them I was up here divulging secrets to my young friend Milo, and they'll really begin to wonder.

Around nine o'clock, if you would be so kind as to give Winnie one of her heart pills; also please check up on Anne to make sure she's comfortable. She had a bout with the stomach flu, poor thing.

Well, off into the night I go!

* * *

Come in.

Come in, dear.

It's all right. Don't be afraid. Not as bad as it looks. A simple mugging. From your mother? Isn't she a dear. Put it down on the

dresser. Next to the flowers.

You'd think I'd been in a boxing match. Ow. Ouch!

That's perfect. Thank you.

Love to talk, but I'm a little drowsy. Pain killers.

We'll chat another time. Thank you for walking Winnie. All right? O.K. I'll see you. See you later.

* * *

These pears are delicious. Thank your mother for me, will you? I need to send her a card. You two were wonderful, ministering to me like that. I'm not sure what I would have done without you.

I suppose this has been hardest on Anne. It doesn't do any good to see your mother like that. She wouldn't come near me when I got home from the hospital. I had to coax her out of her room with lollipops.

It's all very hard to fathom.

What was startling was how everything changed from lovely spring day to quote scene of the crime unquote.

I was standing on the curb at Bloomingdale's waiting for the light. I felt something tugging at me, so I turned around, and this big Puerto Rican character with sideburns had got hold of my purse and was yanking against me. It was clear he wished he was halfway down the block with my purse, not engaged in a tug-of-war with some unreasonable broad from 96th Street.

Now they tell you not to resist, and I know I shouldn't have, but that's just not how I felt at the moment. That bastard, excuse my language, dear, that bastard was not going to take my purse. And when he started to get rough I hit back, and that obviously made him angrier still. I can't remember the last time I've used my fists. Certainly not with Henry. Can you imagine? Oh, God, it hurts to laugh. Can you fetch me that pillow, dear? I'm told I need to keep my legs elevated. You can move the books. My mother always said that, given the choice between reading and brushing one's teeth,

one should choose to read since one can always buy false teeth.

The daffodils are from Henry. The irises are from Malcolm. They both came by to see me. Separately. We're trying to avoid a scene.

The bathroom? Please do.

Oh, Milo! Would you mind fetching me a fresh pair of socks? Upstairs, top drawer of my dresser. Blue or black would be best! Thank you!

That's wonderful. Would you do me one last favor and help me on with these? It's hard bending over. Here.

That's it. Oh, marvelous. Thank you so much. Fresh socks, oh joy.

Something to eat? No?

I had an interesting, well, I'm not sure what to call it. This past week I found myself viewing them, Henry and Malcolm, from a distance, as if I was a parrot sitting on my own shoulder. A wise parrot with a tape recorder. Sounds silly, I know. I was trying to describe something to each of them. I wanted them to know how it felt getting into a fistfight with a young man I'd never met, how it felt to hit him, and how I felt when he hit me back. But when I looked at them, as they were sitting where you're sitting now, separated by a few hours, it was clear how little they were listening to me. And it dawned on me how little either of them had listened to me while I was with them over the months and years.

Isn't that strange? Do you see, Milo? When you're describing how it feels to be in a fight on a sidewalk, with all that anger pouring out of you, you want the person you're with to listen to you. That's the miraculous thing about someone your age, or someone Anne's age. You're actually listening. Aren't you? You're not thinking about your sailboat, or Charlene LeClaire, or your taxes for next year. You're paying attention. That's a miracle. It may not seem like a miracle to you, but it's a miracle to me.

You see, sometimes I worry that I'm not such a terribly good listener myself. It's not just what I think. I've heard this from other

people. Henry, Malcolm. Not to mention my father. You know, you remind me a little of my father. Another earnest man in my life, that's what I need. He had dark eyebrows, and he used to cross his legs like that, and jiggle his foot.

I can see him now, burrowing away, biding his time. They mocked him! He wanted to leave my mother, but he didn't have the guts. There. I've said it. How do I know? If you were older I'd tell you quite a story.

Would you pass the Scotch, dear? Reserve rations, as you can see.

So what do you think? Do you think I'm a good listener?

Are you this quiet around your mother? I doubt that. I'll bet when you're with her you talk nonstop. Anne is so animated with me. We have a marvelous relationship, she and I. I can't imagine how anything could ever come between us.

I'm fine now. I'm really fine. My cast will come off in a couple weeks. My bruises are healing. I'm feeling much better about everything.

You do think I talk too much, don't you? Answer me. Tell me the truth. A bad listener. That's what I am. You think I'm an old windbag who can't keep a man. That's what you think. I've driven away Henry and Malcolm, and I'll drive away the next man I get my hands on. Isn't that what you think?

Ah-hah! A nod. Just what I thought. A nod, a sign, the truth will out! Hallelujah, the truth will out!

Oh, no, don't go. Come back. I'm sorry. Come, Milo. Please don't be angry with me. Please. I'm emotional after everything that's happened. Let me give you a hug.

There, that's better. You're very nice to me. You're the dearest young man. Let's not be angry with each other. Let's be the way we've been. O.K.? Friends.

Come. There's a chocolate truffle for you in the refrigerator. Anne wanted you to have it. Won't that be nice? You can fetch it before you go.

* * *

You keep growing. Anne keeps growing too. Congratulations, by the way, on surviving ninth grade. That's a big achievement.

Well, I've decided several things. Number one, since Anne is starting kindergarten in the fall, we're going to have time together this summer on Cape Cod, just the two of us.

Number two, I'm going back to work in the fall. Full time.

Number three, I'm going to night school. Law school, actually. Can you imagine? The sins of the fathers, et cetera. It's a frightening pattern. It's the Terrifying Divorced Mother from Outer Space! Oh, no! Help!

I see a smile on that face. A lovely smile. You're going to make someone very happy some day. A pretty girl will fall madly for you. Now you're blushing.

It's time to go. Ruth's got tickets for something off-off-Broadway. They're doing Kafka's *Hunger Artist*. That's so Ruth.

I've left a snack for you in the kitchen. Please keep your ears open for Anne. She's been waking. I think she's still scared I'm going to go off and get mugged and not come back. Can you blame her?

* * *

Hello, Milo. Why don't you come in. How was camp? Enjoyable? That's good.

We obviously need to talk. Why don't you have a seat.

I collected the letters and postcards you sent me this summer. Here they are. I'm giving them back to you now. I appreciate your sentiments, but I'm afraid you've gotten the wrong idea about everything. You're a fine young man, and you're very sweet, and I'm very impressed with the caliber of your correspondence, but you've gotten everything twisted around in your mind. I wish we

could put everything back to where we were last year, but I'm afraid that's impossible now.

> Allow me to read a passage from one of your letters. "Dear Mrs. Van Allen: Today I played mixed doubles with a girl named Frances. Everyone here pronounces it 'Frawn-ces,' so we've started calling her 'Frawn-ces the Prawn-ces,' which she hates. Frances is pretty. She's got nice hair and nice teeth, but she's nothing compared to you. You're a beautiful woman, Mrs. Van Allen, not a girl. Being with Frances makes me think how much I enjoy your company, how intelligent and beautiful you are. Is that wrong? Is it wrong for someone my age to be in love with someone your age? What do you think?"

I want to say. This is very awkward. You've put me in a difficult position.

While I was packing for the Cape in June I noticed that you had been through my underwear drawer, and that there were several items missing. I knew it wasn't Anne, she can't reach that high, so I assumed it was you. It's all right. No, don't leave. Sit, Milo! This is important. Let's say what we need to say.

I understand you have feelings for me. I took the incident in June as an isolated prank, but the weight of your letters forces me to act. You see, the feelings you have for me are different from the way adults feel about each other. You're still a boy, a very fine boy, but a boy nonetheless. When you get a little older you'll understand how unworthy someone like me is of your love. You'll begin to understand what real love is. You'll find someone your own age to love, and it will seem different from what you're feeling now. This is not real love. It's not.

I know we can remain friends. I know that. But I'm afraid we can't continue having our conversations, and I don't think it's appropriate for you to babysit for Anne. Why don't we take a break from each other for a while. I'll call you on the telephone. We'll be

in touch.

Here are the letters. Thank you for sending them to me. Why don't we tie things up for now. We're still friends. O.K.?

Good bye, Milo. Thank you for coming down to see me.

* * *

Hello there. What's the sense in explaining, why don't we, why don't you come inside. Anne's asleep, it's all right. Did you have to sneak out of the apartment? Your mother's not returning my phone calls. Not that I blame her.

I saw Henry today. Were you in the park this morning? It was beautiful, wasn't it, with the leaves, yellow and red. Hard to believe it's raining now. After I put Anne to bed I looked out the window and saw the rain, and the leaves being swept down Madison Avenue into the gutters. That's when I decided to call you.

There's a set of stairs leading down from Fifth Avenue to the 70th street pond, the model boat pond. Do you know where I mean? I was with Anne at the pond, and I saw Henry walking down the stairs with a woman. A girl, really. Just out of college, in college, not yet matriculated, who knows.

I froze, and I thought: what if Anne sees her father with this 21-year-old or nineteen-year-old, or whatever she is? I wanted to spare her that. I pointed her the other way, and we began walking away from him. The monster. I was trying not to cry. It was, I don't know how to describe it.

Would you. Would you mind coming over here and sitting next to me? I need to sit next to someone. It's all right. We have many things to say to each other, I know. Come over here and we'll say those things. Come. It's all right. I won't hurt you.

You Have the Right to Your Body

melina ramirez |
acrylic paint and black glitter on canvas
2.5' by 1.5'

I'll Be Damned

contact this artist at:
elijennett@hotmail.com

| elijah jennett
spray paint/stencil on canvas
16"x20"

Untitled

taylor rulon-miller |
digital print shot with diana style camera
12" by 12"

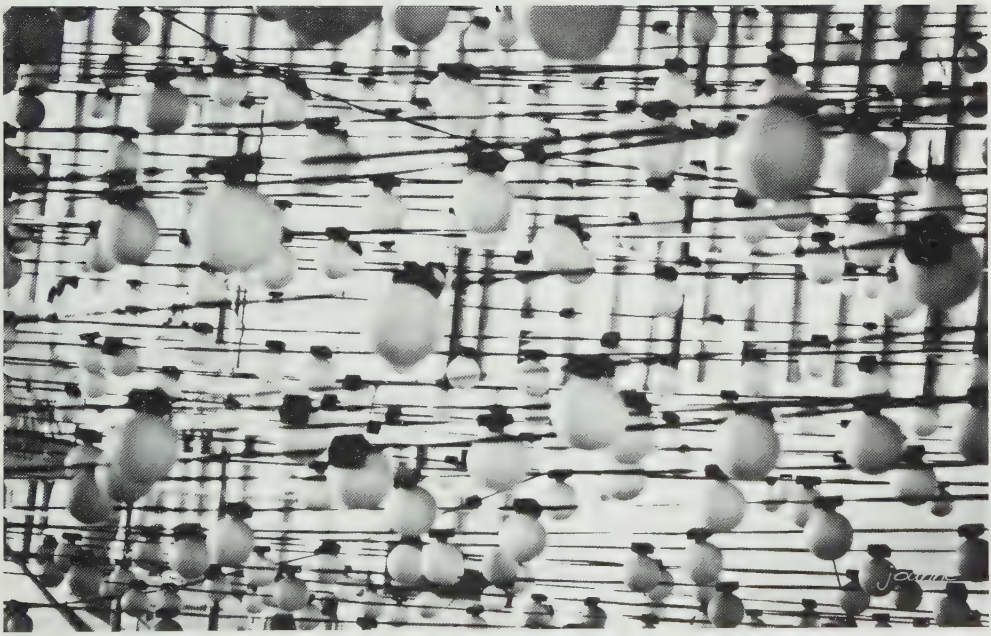
contact this artist at:
taytayru@gmail.com

Hope Floats

contact this artist at:
vmgarcia@scu.edu.

| veronica garcia
digital photograph
5” by 7”

All of the Lights



alejandra germann |
digital photograph
8" by 10"

Purple Weight

contact this artist at:
charlotta.kratz@gmail.com

| charlotta kratz
digital photograph
5" by 7.5"

Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose (after Sargent)

charlotte allen |
oil on canvas
24" by 30"

contact this artist at:
ch.allen1989@gmail.com

Mictecacihuatl

contact this artist at:
ari_rodriguez5490@yahoo.com

| ariana rodriguez
digital photograph
7" by 14"

Affe mit Schädel — "Monkey with Skull"

Hugo Rheinhold
Berlin, 1893

A monkey sat on a pile of books. He picked up a human skull that rested at his feet. And, as he picked it up, the pieces of the skull jolted into speech.

"When the monster of violence," confessed the eye sockets, "is tomorrow's promise, I see occupation in the caverns of my reflection. It emerges through a tattered veil, but this white horseman is not enough; he has only one crown."

"To remain in this country's pregnant embrace," said the jaw, "is to accept faces draped and hooded, but these, these cannot hide the grimace of nameless anguish. For beneath the veil they cry, mouths open and chins tilted to the sky."

"Here," said the chin, "soldiers emerge like the dead. Niqābs do not shape hope around women's faces, and eyes do not lie."

"With the language of context gone," said the sunken temple, "two worlds, obscured by words, war. They no longer speak with the vocabulary of flesh; they know only paper words, words that do not know one man's patriot as another man's insurgent. This language breaks at feelings of purple and blue spreading beneath the skin, at green sprouting from mouths that once lapped a feverish red."

The monkey stared in silence, waiting for more.

"Insha' Allah," rattled the teeth, "a priestess is offering the crescent moon and a cross to the back of a framed man. 'To love one another' is tattooed on his back. And above her, her two sisters sit among ruined walls and cracks; rubble, rock, and broken ground are stoned on their faces. They stare down steel hollows eye to eye,

while their sister recites the resonances of her dream."

"But we skulls," turned the cheek, "...we have seen the black-ironed bombs scratch out our people's faces, and those that live, their howling hearts are muted. Their eyes are blinded, burnt over, turned to blank bulbs of light."

Just then, the sockets began to speak again, saying:

"There is no longer choice in these reflections, only a helpless witness, a woman watching an angel fall. The black veil over her face cannot conceal, and her long black dress cannot hide. She has a pregnant belly. It is full of flags. They drape over generations, heads and faces."

"This is the inheritance of loss," said the disjointed, human skull all at once, "our shared sorrow." The monkey stared at the skull. It grunted. It moved from the stack of books it had sat on, headed back to war.

Seal of Confession

Father Kenneth Moore did not believe in God. He believed in man's ability to pretend God existed. Kenneth liked to pretend, thought of himself as the ultimate actor, the symbol of comfort and faith fooling them all.

Father Moore believed in the anonymity of a confessional cabinet, its healing powers. It soothed him to hear the secrets of his congregation—the father who lusted over his daughter, the son who drove his girlfriend to the abortion clinic. He indulged himself behind the shield of wooden doors. After all, he couldn't be that bad. Look at the people he was forgiving.

Growing up cloistered, a circumstantial only child, Kenneth learned the art of acting. His father, Leo, an Italian immigrant with intense dementia, kept Kenneth hidden in the leaking corners of a tiny cabin. Once the vacation home of Shiva, Kenneth's mother and Leo's mistress, the cabin became a permanent hideaway, one where Kenneth was sometimes called George.

The confessional reminded Kenneth of the cabin—the familiar scent of wood, the sensation of flesh on cool panels. Even the partition was oddly familiar. He used to observe the world through crude screen windows as Leo patronized his mother. It was easier to keep his back turned; he didn't like to look at people, as eye contact made him uncomfortable. Kenneth remembered Shiva's nature—needy, but quietly enraged. She was spiteful, a quality Kenneth attributed to women. Sometimes she poisoned Leo's food. Not enough to kill him, but just the right dose to make him ill. Kenneth wondered if Regina's pie had been dangerous.

1962—Kenneth and George huddled in the floor by the radio, sharing guilty smiles. Their father slept peacefully while they

relished the chance to hear Elvis free of censorship. Kenneth shifted in his camp shorts every time Presley reached the chorus of "Good Luck Charm," ready to be punished. The fire cracked occasionally, making Leo twitch and mumble, but he didn't wake.

When the song concluded, Kenneth and George gathered their fishing gear, poles and worms and hooks, and stuffed them in the safety of a plaid blanket. They carried their boots—hung around their boyish necks from tied laces—to avoid the clunk and thuds of footsteps and pattered out the door in silent socks.

Once outside, the boys made a break for it, just a few feet down the hill, a few steps east to the docks.

"What if he wakes up?" Kenneth said. He looked concerned; Leo's temper loomed beneath the skyline.

"He won't," George said. He shook his head for emphasis, emerald eyes flashing. He was naturally in charge, older by six and a half minutes.

"But what if he does?" Kenneth watched his brother untie the boat, a rickety mass of wood with flecks of robin's egg blue paint. His mother's name looked faded on the side, a shadow of gold letters.

"He won't. Come on."

Kenneth rolled his eyes, surrendering to his brother's orders. "You just don't care because I'm the one who'll get in trouble." The blanket of supplies felt heavy; the moth-eaten wool suffocated his skin. He descended slowly, noticing the black vibrations of fish gliding through the water. It looked like opaque, green soup.

George didn't respond. The unsteady vessel rocked mercilessly against the current; splashes of green invaded the cracks and splinters of wood and turned the boat's texture to slime.

"I think we should go back," Kenneth said.

"We're already out here. Don't be such a baby," George said. "I'll tell dad it's my fault, ok?"

Kenneth nodded. "Look at the clouds." A haze of slate blues, dark purples and steel grays stained the sky. Blended, they

transformed into the shape and hue of a bruise, the bull's-eye of a brewing storm.

"I'm not going all the way back. We're here, and we're gonna fish. Got it?" George said.

"You're not gonna catch anything in the rain," Kenneth said.

"It's not raining," George said. He prepared his pole, retrieved a terrified earthworm and stabbed it, quick and easy. Burgundy oozed from its center. George cast it in the murky water and drowned it.

Thunder mumbled over the lake. Only a tease. It quickly reared back and burst in all its fury.

"I told you," Kenneth said. He was drenched in fresh rain.

"Do you ever shut up?" George said. This time he had to yell over the storm. Kenneth heard "Get this up." He rolled his eyes and stood, moving toward the gear. The boat rocked with fervor, swaying with each awkward stride of a 12-year-old boy. His boot slipped forward and recovered, slid diagonally and failed. A swell of panic rose from Kenneth's lungs. His torso wobbled backwards and, trying to counterbalance, he thrust it forward. The other boot slid beneath him, folding one leg behind the other. His arms swung to the sides as he tried to balance, but it was too late. His head collided with the rim of the boat. The rest was darkness.

The two decrepit fishermen who plucked them out of the water described the scene as a tragic accident. They surmised one drowned while trying to shove the other back in the boat. George was drifting face down when they found him, rain pelting his back. Kenneth was found halfway in the boat, his head in the hollow mouth, toes just skimming the water's edge.

After the dust settled over George's grave, Kenneth discovered his true nature from his father.

"You're a murderer," Leo said. He didn't look at his son, stared into the rolling fire. "God took George, took him away because he knows who you are, what you are. I didn't want to believe it when your mother died. I blamed it on nature, but you

killed her, too. You're evil, Ken. I knew it all along."

Kenneth sat in the floor a good distance from Leo. He pictured his mother in the throes of labor, her collapsing organs unable to take the pressure of birthing an evil twin. Kenneth imagined her smiling as they held up George, then suddenly twisting her face into a cold expression. He envisioned her heart stopping with his first gulp of the world. Kenneth's funeral clothes, a cheap black sports coat and khakis, rumpled with his posture. He needed George.

"Forgive me father for I have sinned..." Here we go, Kenneth thought. "It's been six months since my last confession."

Leo lived in the cabin permanently after George's funeral. He wanted to be close to the water that swallowed his son; he wanted to protect the community from a murderer. A photo of George, the right side torn from Kenneth's silhouette, became the lone decoration on the mantelpiece. Leo talked to it sometimes, nodded at the fireplace during Kenneth's "episodes," sudden swells of severe pain and nausea. Leo told him the devil had taken residence in him, and the evil was trying to break through his flesh and straight black hair.

"That's the devil in you, Ken. You have to fight it." Leo wheeled himself to the doorframe. "God is purging Satan from your soul," he said. He pointed at Kenneth's vomit. "See?"

Other times, Leo concluded God was punishing Kenneth for murdering his brother.

"It's about time God punished you," Leo said. His eyes remained on the fireplace. After these incidents, after his punishment, Kenneth's sweat-splattered face softened. He grew calm, defenseless, vulnerable. Sometimes he was kind, wheeling his father to the fireplace, dressing in George's clothes.

"It's been a long time," *George* said.

"Too long," Leo said. "Sit with me." He motioned to the

empty rocking chair on his right. "Where have you been?"

"I can't tell you that, but I'm fine."

"Is your mother all right?" Leo said.

"She's fine."

"You look like her you know. You should've been a priest, George. You have kind eyes. Priests have kind eyes," he said. "You remember that."

When Kenneth returned in his own clothing, Leo wept.

What Kenneth discovered later in life seemed to make sense: the pain drilling bits out of his skull was evidently caused by migraines, a direct consequence of cracking his head on the fishing boat. The weakened state was caused by hours, even days of pain and vomiting. Even so, Kenneth decided to be *George* sometimes. When he talked to himself at night, when he delivered a sermon, when he dribbled tender drops of holy water on the soft innocence of a baby. But by himself, in the cool darkness of a confessional cabinet, Kenneth came out to play. The sparkle—perhaps compassion—in his eyes dried out in cool, black inkwells. But the box was more than the echoes of guilt or remorse reverberating through the screen; it was a quiet hole of darkness. He flourished in the darkness.

Kenneth dozed that afternoon, a sinner's plea floating in the caverns of his subconscious. The confessional always exhausted him, especially when the sin was monotonous. Once again, a child had not honored her parents. He blessed the girl, forgave her and slept. Hours passed before a fist collided with the confessional, vibrating his head and destroying his dream. Kenneth burst of the darkness and glared, failed to convert himself to *George*.

"You're interrupting me," he said.

Abigail Reynolds was the local florist. She created arrangements for holidays, christenings, weddings and funerals. She generally didn't make deliveries, but as if it would save her soul, Abigail made exceptions for her beloved church.

"The booth is empty," she said. "I have a delivery for tomorrow's service."

Kenneth stared. He could only see parts of her face, but the segments peeking through a bloom of lilies stunned him. Her eyes were cold, glossy emerald. Strands of salt and pepper hair hung over her cheekbones in fragments like spun silk. Kenneth envisioned a frosted spider web. Her hands clutched the vase like a child. They were older hands, dotted with wisdom. The left, however, lacked a wedding ring. It seemed unnaturally missing.

"Where do you want this?" she said.

"Just put them on the altar." As she set down the arrangement, the remnants of death, easily identified by those sharing the experience, marked her face. Abigail Reynolds was a widow, a mother. The wrinkles around her eyes unveiled years of laughter, but the deep valleys of her forehead resonated with sorrow. Kenneth had seen death, heard death, caused death. He recalled finding Leo face down in a bowl of fresh cherries, the aftermath of a heart attack. He remembered killing George simply, his loss of balance. He felt oddly close to her.

"Sign this," she said. He scribbled on the receipt, read the dedication: *Donated by Regina Garthey, in loving memory of my mother, Hannah Garthey*. His intestines braided around his lungs. Regina Garthey. She was dangerous. This arrangement was for him.

Regina unraveled the moment she chose to stay after Sunday worship for counseling. It had only been a few months ago. Her mother had succumbed to cancer, and she needed Kenneth's guidance to cope with the grief. A gratuitous cherry pie was provided the next Sunday. He understood this as a bad omen, though Kenneth wasn't a spiritual man; if he wanted pie, there was a bakery across the street.

Regina suggested following him home, warming the pie as only "a woman" could do. She was not one to be trifled with, let alone r efused. And so it began. A few times a week, Regina waited

until sundown, until all the office workers from the church, those with irrepressible instincts for gossip, went home. Kenneth tried to enjoy her company, but it didn't last long. He couldn't recall the date, but he knew it ended on a Tuesday. Everything else remained clear.

Regina walked up to his apartment and sat next to him. "My mother died when I was sixteen," she said. It was matter-of-fact, simple in its execution. Her prior grief counseling had been a sham.

Kenneth found it intriguing. He wanted to tell her the smell of her cherry pie reminded him of Leo's lifeless face after he pulled him out of the bowl of cherries. "Why waste my time on it then?" He looked up towards the ceiling, limbs stretched in all directions, bereft of feelings. He had the emotional response of a corpse.

"I don't know. I wanted to see if you cared," she said.

"I really don't. But it's my job to, I suppose," he said.

"I know you don't. I could tell. By your eyes," she said. "I even threw in a few details to see if you were listening."

"Like what?" he said.

"So you weren't listening. I see. I said I went shopping with my mother. You just nodded your head."

"Some people spend time with their relatives. They never leave," he said. His voice faded into a whisper.

"What do you mean they never leave? You're telling me a priest doesn't believe in heaven?" she said.

"I believe in hell," he said.

"Then you have to believe in heaven," she said.

"Why is that?" he said.

"Everything has an opposite," she said.

"Did they teach you that in school? I can see how much it's helped..."

"What?"

He didn't move, continued to lock eyes with the ceiling. "Look at yourself. You're acting so surprised that I don't give a shit

about your life and your problems. You know what I think? I think your mother got lucky. She got the hell out of this world."

"You're a bastard," she said.

"Yes I am. But you already know that. I'm not exactly chaste now am I?" he said.

"We're not sleeping together," she said.

"But you want to. That's why you come here and lie in my bed and wait for me to touch you. You're pathetic," he said. He finally looked her in the eyes. "And that's pretty bad coming from me."

She stared at him, her face flooded with tears. Kenneth thought she almost looked pretty; the trail of makeup running from her eyes somehow looked right with dyed auburn hair. She was speechless.

"Go home. It's not gonna happen." His head jerked with the harsh collision of her fist, but he deserved it. Nobody could stomach honesty these days. "She would've have been better off with you, George," he said.

Kenneth plucked a lily from the arrangement, crunched its petals, and climbed back into the confessional. His head pounded.

"Forgive me father for I have sinned..." Someone had been waiting. "It's been two weeks since my last confession..."

Abigail. Kenneth braced himself, pressed his hand against the wooden box. Flakes of burnt orange pollen smeared the wall.

"I make beautiful things, Father. Flowers, handmade things, they make people emotional, but in a good way. I like to make people happy, I like to see their feelings...You see I don't remember having them. It's the only thing I have left, Father, and someone has taken advantage of it."

The pit of his stomach rose up and grabbed his tongue. His mouth went dry; his palms grew slick. He needed a cigarette.

"This man visits my shop too often to be normal. He used to order an arrangement a year, a set anniversary bouquet. But ever

since I hired a helper, he's shown up and ordered anything in her hands. She's young, too young for him, but I see the way they look at each other. He has a wife, Father."

"Go on," he said.

"I ruined their marriage. I told his wife everything I knew."

"You're upset because your customer had an affair?" Kenneth said.

"They're members of the church," she said.

"You did the right thing. Marriage is sacred," he said. "This man should be confessing to adultery." He could have confessed that morning, but Kenneth couldn't recall.

"It's not that I'm questioning my actions; I'm questioning people. Look what we do to each other."

"It's not our place to question God," he said.

"We can disobey everything he stands for but we can't question him? Why do we bother? What is the point of all this?"

Kenneth suddenly felt naked. Lies sprouted just beyond the grasp of his tongue. He had no way of answering.

"I don't know how to believe in anything," she said.

"That is something you have to figure out on your own," he said. His eyelids twitched; his fingers trailed up and down his pants. A silent hand shaded the partition. Kenneth reached for it slowly, but it slipped away. She was gone.

Kenneth trudged home that night in deep contemplation. He shoved his hands in his pockets, crossed the street, strolled two blocks south, and turned into the alleyway between the bakery and an abandoned antique shop.

His apartment rested above the former antique shop. Kenneth liked it that way, occupying the top half of an abandoned building. Most nights he felt like an antique himself, shrouded and preserved in layers of cobwebs and dust. It didn't matter to Kenneth; the only thing he cared for was privacy. If one were to walk past the bakery, pause to open the scone nestled in wax paper,

they would never imagine the presence of a lonely priest looming above.

As he reached the steel door, Kenneth paused to rub his temples. Pain was throbbing through his skull; it bounced from eye to eye. He gripped the door handle. It was cold, unwelcoming. He expelled a sigh in tandem with the wail of steel hinges. But he stopped abruptly at an unfamiliar crackle. A tiny scrap of paper lay crushed beneath his shoe; bits of cursive poked around the toe. He bent down slowly, approaching the dirty note with the apprehension of a man petting a wild animal. Once his fingers brushed the dusty floor, he snatched it, shoved it in his pocket and proceeded to stomp up the creaking steps. A blinking, yellow lamp illuminated the sparse apartment; silhouettes of furniture dotted the living room, and a 10-inch television rested in the corner. Kenneth reached for the paper once more, flattened it with his palm on the olive green coffee table. *Father Moore, what are you trying to prove?*

Lovedrug / Indian Summer

Mumbai, India

Boundless inclusion in the heart of all that has become. ~Buddha

Mumbai, formally known as Bombay, you encompassed my soul. You fed into my veins and ran through my bloodstream to every part of my existence. My being is drawn to you while my mind tells me you make no sense. You are a world of contradictions– 233 square miles holding 14 million people.

Heat seeps beneath my skin, into my veins, pushing water through pores I didn't know existed.

This is an alternate universe. I feel like nothing I have ever known yet like everything I ever wanted. You know, the funny thing is that I met a lot of people who hated you. They warned of pollution, people, and rain. All true.

The trains are the veins through the body of Mumbai.

People stream through the cement overpass, much too narrow for the number of travelers needing to move quickly to their train. The locals are on a mission. They know where they are going, the time it takes to get there, and that it requires a fight to reach their destination. This is not for the weak of heart. I look significantly out of place.

Run, push, reach, grab onto whatever will hold your weight. Struggle onto the step and shove through the crowd of women. There is no empty space. If only our bodies could deflate and we could squeeze one more woman between us. Personal space means nothing. A woman's hand is clutching a bag near my upper thigh, while another women's face is one train jolt away from landing in my cleavage. The significant height difference between the majority

of Indian women and myself works both for and against me at this moment. Tall enough to reach the fresh air being pushed to the ceiling of the train car, yet tall enough to feel violated by the woman's cheek on my breast.

I stand amongst the women of Mumbai and breathe in the Divine.

The God of All Things.

A striking orange sari draped over warm brown skin with a gold nose jewel shining next to deep story-lined wrinkles.

A defecating man witnessed through the rusting metal bars of a moving train.

A 60-year-old landlord friend Adarsh making his home my own.

Grey greenish skies– a distasteful mix of monsoon season and immense pollution.

A hostel located 40 minutes outside the city center becoming a refuge for lone wanderers. Playing on a pillow-covered ground, drinking chai, smoking hashish in a linoleum lined storage room, and talking about the worlds we come from. We were best friends for those moments we spent in the same murky square feet of the world.

Climbing the watered steps to Mount Mary Church. Passing wooden rosaries and wax body part candles– various forms of prayer for ailments of the mind, body, and soul.

A sidewalk lined with tarps creating houses for over 30 families. Rain leaking in, a dirty sidewalk as a bed, and street water splashing into their home. Young girls painting each other's toenails under their blue tarp roof.

The Gateway of India (1924), built for the visit of King George and Queen Mary 13 years past their visit. True Indian fashion.

Children extending their small hands in cups to catch coins falling from my white skin and foreign eyes.

A stray dog sniffing garbage piles lining the Arabian Sea. Not the only scavenger, my friend.

Victoria Terminus, nearly two million people shuffle through your insides daily.

A woman washing red and turquoise saris in the pools of water between coastal boulders.

Gutter water up to my knees.

Surviving rickshaws.

Frenzy, noises, movement, spirit, laughter, and wetness.

Beauty of and among the chaos.

Mumbai scrapes you raw– a compilation of journal entries.

July 30, 2010
As westerners we almost want that raw emotion, feeling, suffering, whatever that we can never truly know. Why do we want it? Maybe to be closer to God, maybe to grow as people, maybe to feel something real.

July 31, 2010
In my head I have an English/Indian accent right now because I haven't heard an American accent in a while, so funny. It's kind of French too.

August 1, 2010
I may or may not have just caused a bike with a bag of dead chickens on the back to fall over. But I don't think it was entirely my fault.
If I rid myself of [negative thoughts and emotions], or try to, I will grow in my mind and better be able to serve others. And ultimately, I know this is what I want to do.

August 2, 2010
Today I saw probably the most heart wrenching thing I have seen in India, which says a lot I guess because India can be pretty despairing. A woman got on the train with her 6-year- old son and she could not have weighed more than 80 pounds. She had a huge sore on her cheek and was literally wasting away, an obvious AIDS patient. I cannot help but assume that she was a prostitute who got infected and now relies on her young son to beg for her on the trains. At one point she yelled at him for some reason and her voice was like a shrill squawk, barely human. She looked miserable, in so much pain. She had the most hollow and sad eyes. And I couldn't help but feel so bad for her son who will probably lose his mother before he is 8 and this would be the only memory he had of her.

August 4, 2010
The need here seems limitless.

August 6, 2010
What a wonderful thing it is to be blissful.

I have found the Divine.

I see you, God of All Things. In the dirt, flooded streets, sweet tangy smell of body odor and incense, garbage covered coastline, children snatching at my pockets, swirling chaos of people/rickshaws/bikes/cars/buses/cows. You are interwoven into the fabric of Mumbai.

The walkway out to Haji Ali Mosque is nearly a kilometer long. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. All I can do is pray. Blessed art though amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Blind women, malnourished children, legless men, naked babies, wounded, begging, pregnant, despairing, dying, surviving– endless. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

I feel your tears soaking my feet, dripping down my cheek.

I witness you, and I love your Every Being.

Hunger

It grows stronger the more we feed it,
thrives too often in the flesh, in the raw
pang of wanting. Not in the wolf gnawing

through the door, but in what keeps
the wolf at bay. The expectation. The scent
of grilled sausages on the street. The long

line at the gallery. Not the conjugal visit,
but the date scrawled on the prison wall.
The impending deal, the prelude. Not the monk's

transcendence, but his self-denial. A child's
dream, not a father's approval. It beats back
discontent. The pebble thrown to the lover's

window, not the serenade. The last ticket
for the first bus out. Attainment's delusion
and the art of attainment. The sun before it rises.

After

You don't talk the morning after, just pump the Coleman stove without his help and listen to the hiss as the smell of coffee sharpens into headache. The hiss replaces conversation, then come dull clunks of metal pots and camping cups. Anything to fill the hard silence.

Alternative School parent-kid camping trip. Bonding. Nature. And you, in charge of food as long as someone else dealt with stoves, fires, fuel, lighting—the precarious male tasks. That's where Rick came in. An unlikely parent for a hippie-kid school, the only one to smoke or likely own a gun. You'd grown weary of nice mom-men, your own husband included. What Rick was tired of, he didn't share.

Endless planning for one 28-hour state park expedition: stomach-tingling evenings collaborating on menus and lists—alert to the half-quirk of his eyebrow, his reluctant grin—knowing this airless morning would come. Your kids hopefully still baffled as to why last night you discovered an extra pup tent and cajoled them in with a bag of pre-popped popcorn—normally forbidden critter bait.

Good Parents move clumsily around, their suspicions near-visible vapor trails. They're struck silent too—no sighs, popping backs, required cheer. And it's freezing—who'd thought April would be spring?

If he'd just crack one more half-smile, or say a single word, or look into your eyes instead of around. Then you could be the cowgirl who'd dismiss the night's clutchings with a shrug and wry smile.

Before, you'd pitied the other moms, sparks gone from their lives, as from yours. Now, afterwards, they're going home relieved, to wake from drive-induced naps and hear their children's Playstation shrieks and husbands moving crap around the basement or tapping keyboards or whatever it is generic husbands do. So glad to waken from your dream, so glad of their dullness, so glad they are not coming home you.

Diagram

I have said all the wrong things.
I thought he would

peel me open like an orange,
split the rind, thick

epicarp stripped, shuck this
raw husk to see what's

underneath, high in tannins
& other polyphenols—I'd die

& dye, dour milkglass mouth
pressed to mine. I know, in the light

of anatomy & morning
that we weren't anything,

white thigh against milk—
white thigh; no atria involved.

I have split myself in two
& found nothing, I have halved

the single cell where I thought
we kept our ventricles, but

it only spilled dissolved molecules
that might have been
part of a hand or some absent
organ, & I have diagrammed

it all to remember every way
a body can be stripped.

tom andes |

"...And Then I Became an Adjunct"; Or, Fourteen Ways of Looking at an Adjunct; Or, The Whale

for Matthew Henriksen

1.

When I was nine years old, in the third grade at New Durham Elementary in New Durham, New Hampshire, my mother routinely forgot to pick me up after school. I couldn't take the bus because my parents had decided to tuition me to a different school district than the one we lived in; they didn't think the public schools in Milton were up to snuff, so after homeschooling me for a year, they'd enrolled me in the second grade several towns away from where we lived. School let out at 2:45. On a good day, I only had to wait by the flagpole in front of the building for 10 or 15 minutes before my mother arrived. Other days, I was still standing in front of the school several hours later, when the sun set, and the teachers went home for the day. The more kindly disposed might offer me a ride, but I refused. It was a 45 minute drive to our house from New Durham, a considerably longer drive when the weather was bad—this being New Hampshire, during the school year, the weather was always bad—half of it along a dirt road, and once she found out where I lived, nobody in her right mind would have wanted to drive me to Milton. My mother ran her own business, which excused everything. When she arrived, harried, apologetic, she threw up her hands: "I'm sorry; I had a customer. I got busy and forgot you were here." In just such a way did I start down the path to becoming an adjunct.

2.

Tonight, New Year's Eve, I'd finished celebrating early. Well before midnight, I left the party and passed out in the back of my father's station wagon, which I'd commandeered since moving out of my parents' house a few months ago. At some point, I either handed Jamie my keys, or he rummaged my pockets and took them. The first time we went off the road, when the car started shaking, I briefly regained consciousness. "Don't worry about it," Jamie laughed. "Everything's fine. Just go back to sleep." Later, when I woke up in Portsmouth Hospital, the cop standing next to my bed told me we'd had an accident. While I was passed out in the back of the car, Jamie had gotten in a high speed chase with the police; since he didn't have a license, and he was on parole, if he'd pulled over, he would have gone back to jail. So Jamie's logic seemed to have run. That night, just as we'd reentered Portsmouth, he'd hit a patch of ice and lost control of the car, which spun three times before it ran head on at 50 miles an hour into a car full underage drinkers; two of the girls in that car would end up in traction for the next nine months. "Jamie left you lying facedown in the middle of the road," the officer said, as if that established something about Jamie's character—as if I wouldn't have fled the scene myself, had I been capable of it. While the station wagon was spinning, I'd flown out the right rear window, the same window we'd put out the night before when we'd sideswiped a loading dock doing donuts in a warehouse parking lot, and I'd landed on my face in Route One, unconscious, though miraculously, I sustained only a few superficial scrapes and bruises. A few days after the accident, my parents gave me an ultimatum: I could keep my rented room in Dover, or I could move back home and start applying to colleges. Thus began my academic career, which is to say, my career as an adjunct.

3.

Some months before the accident, in that same station wagon, driving back to Andy's one morning, we'd seen an old man riding

a bike along the shoulder of the road. "Hey, pull up next to this guy," Sean said, rolling down the window, and he leaned out the passenger's side of the car. Afterward, for a long time, I liked to tell people obliging Sean that morning was the worst thing I'd ever done. Of course, that wasn't true. Still, when he pushed the guy off the bike, we laughed until we cried. It was the kind of laughter, later in life, I would only be able to share with a fellow adjunct.

4.

Eventually, Sean went to jail for robbing a bank. Of the guys in that band, only John became a professional musician; he plays bass for a band called Street Dogs. I never did find out what happened to Jamie after he went back to jail. I became an adjunct.

5.

My freshman year, Christian lived across the hall in the dorms on the British campus, and many was the night we'd made the shamefaced procession to his door, furtively bumming a couple of the pills he never seemed to take himself. In Rahul's room, we passed the bong and read passages from *The Iliad* out loud to each other the night before we had a test in World Literature, which was the only way we could stand reading Homer; it was my first and last encounter with that text until I found myself contemplating putting it on a syllabus as an adjunct.

6.

In Oklahoma, my mother introduced me to her realtor's daughter. From there on out, she and I spent all our time together smoking pot and drinking beer in her car while we drove from house to house trying to score cocaine; usually, we ended up scoring crystal meth, which we'd drive out onto the endless grid of empty county roads outside town and snort. She had an on-again, off-again boyfriend, and over the next Christmas break, once he was back in the picture, the three of us sat in a room in one of his father's warehouses on

the east side of town mixing cocaine with water, cooking it in the microwave, and smoking it. One night, driving my mother's black Geo Prism back from the warehouse, I got pulled over. I had half an ounce of marijuana in my pocket and a small quantity of cocaine in the glove box. I was reading Paul Auster's *New York Trilogy*—I'd taken a Samuel Beckett course the summer before, and I loved Auster's books because they read like Beckett Lite—and it was on the passenger's seat beside me. When the cop asked me why my eyes were bloodshot, I told him I'd just finished watching *Braveheart*. After shining his light in the car a moment longer, he told me to make sure my mother got her taillight fixed and wished me a good night, therefore sparing me a serious bump in the road to academic success. Twelve years later, at 32, the recent recipient of an MFA in Creative Writing, I moved back home with my parents, and I drove that same car, which had 220,000 miles on the odometer, to my first job as an adjunct.

7.

One night, a girl I'd been dating told me the overflowing ashtray on my kitchen counter was disgusting; shortly thereafter, I emptied it and fell asleep—alone. I woke up twenty minutes later to the smell of scorched upholstery, aware of the unpleasantly intense heat in the room. By the time I got out of bed, the fire had spread from the trash can to the kitchen counter; when I ran out to the hallway, the door slammed behind me. In the hallway, half naked, I sprinted from one end of the building to the other, pounding on doors until one of the other tenants finally called the fire department. At the beginning of the semester, I'd petitioned to live off campus, and I'd rented a studio above the pharmacy in the middle of town; in fact, there wasn't much more to Henniker than that pharmacy, a marginally famous covered bridge, and the college. Consequently, for weeks after the fire, I ran into people who asked me what the scorched remains of my armchair were doing in front of my building; they wanted to know if I was the guy who'd (nearly) burnt the pharmacy down. Years later, unpacking some boxes, I found a smoke-damaged copy of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, a novel

I'd probably never be fortunate enough to teach as an adjunct.

8.

In the UK, I supplemented my barman's income installing fireplaces as an apprentice laborer. One day, when we finished early, rather than ask Peter to drop me at the station, I asked him to drop me at the pub at the Swan hotel. Upon waking, some hours later, I found myself flat on my back on one of the benches at the station; the platform was deserted except for some birds, who were pecking at the remains of the lunch I'd packed for myself, anticipating a full day's work. Last I remembered, I'd been trying to scrounge enough change for a half pint at the pub across from Arundel station. I managed to pull myself together well enough to board the next northbound train, but it wasn't until I'd arrived home, eaten a plate of leftover Chinese, and removed my trousers to take a bath, that I realized what the other passengers on the train and my roommates had known all along, namely, that I'd soiled myself. I immortalized that experience in a poem the undergraduate literary journal at my alma mater didn't accept for publication, though they accepted another poem, "Twilight," which dealt more obliquely with my memories of those times—an uncharacteristically happy poem, I felt when I wrote it—a poem that eventually appeared as the second entry under publications on my resume when I began looking for work as an adjunct.

9.

Eventually, in Oklahoma, I threw the realtor's daughter over for someone who would actually let me fuck her. She lived in a two-bedroom house with her cousin, who was still in high school, and the cousin's fiancé, who'd dropped out of college and worked for the city. After a few months, she broke things off, and I entertained the thought of getting a commercial driver's license before I decided to further my education in New Orleans, having concluded I was a man of letters, and by dropping out of college, I'd abandoned my calling. Just as every door in my dreams that fall seemed to open

onto the same room, so any one of those moonlit country lanes I'd left behind in Oklahoma led only to the same destination, to becoming an adjunct.

10.

At 24, a college graduate, I moved from the front of the house to the back of the house at the French Caribbean restaurant where I worked in New Orleans. I liked the first waitress because I could almost effortlessly make her blush. The second waitress attended Tulane; whatever else you said about her, she wasn't going to let anyone stand in her way. Because she actually deigned to sleep with me, I found third waitress inferior to her friends, though later, once she left me, I would manage to convince myself she was a prize. The second waitress had started a philosophy reading group, and she asked me to join. Though I was dating the third waitress, and though I flirted mercilessly with the first waitress, I still wanted to sleep with the second waitress, so I suffered through nearly half of *A History of Sexuality Vol. 1* by Michel Foucault, thinking it might afford me the opportunity. On the one occasion I attended the reading group, I didn't have much to say; I'd found the book lacking the sex the title seemed to have promised. Despite my silence on this point, I can only assume everybody in that room knew I was destined to become an adjunct.

11.

The first waitress got married and went to veterinary school in California. The second waitress got tenure someplace in Chicago. The third waitress spent a year hanging out with anarchists in San Francisco before she moved back to New Orleans to attend Tulane Medical School; from time to time, she sent me a letter, wanting to know what I'd ended up doing with myself, what I'd become.

12.

My job in California consisted of proctoring electronically administered tests at a Prometric Testing Center in San Francisco. Most of the other TCAs—"Test Center Administrators"—were college students, five years younger than I was, which made me feel like a creepy old man. Though I'd graduated from college, I wanted to get into the MFA program at San Francisco State. With my bachelor's degree, I made the same wage these kids did, 12 dollars an hour; though I didn't like to think of myself as ambitious, I craved professional advancement or at least a few more years respite from the working world, besides which, I could always write a novel. In theory, I liked working at Prometric because aside from the times when I needed to check test-takers in or out, I could either sit at the desk and read or smoke cigarettes on the fire escape; in actual practice, every time I started to get involved in a novel or stepped outside to light a cigarette, someone needed more scratch paper, which I found more maddening than not being able to read or smoke at work in the first place. I spent the morning of September 11, 2001 fielding phone calls from irate test takers up and down the Northern California coast. Initially, no one at Prometric seemed to grasp the seriousness of what had happened in New York, and they adhered to their policy of not granting refunds for cancellations within 24 hours of a scheduled test, a policy it fell to me to enforce over the telephone. In retrospect, I consider this appropriate training for becoming an adjunct.

13.

A few weeks before we broke up, my then-girlfriend told me she'd been thinking about moving back to Fresno, and I got angry, though even at the time, I felt like I was going through the motions, feigning what I should have felt if I'd actually cared. On her birthday, I got angry with her for wearing a yellow ribbon on her purse. Her brother-in-law was serving in Iraq, but as an avid listener of leftwing radio, as an avid reader of leftwing websites, not to mention a full-time graduate student, I'd determined that

wearing a yellow ribbon amounted to an expression of pro-war sympathies. After lunch, when I walked her to her car, she was crying. That night, while she was at work, though I knew better than to call her again, I left flowers and a note on her door: *I'm sorry I ruined your birthday*. It is in just such a posture that one should approach the institution as an adjunct.

14.

After four months, the girl I dated in graduate school and I had our first fight; a few weeks after that, I found a studio apartment down the street from hers. For the next year and a half, we toyed with the idea of living together, but whenever one of us wanted to do it, the other didn't. After many months of this tug of war, we broke up. By that time, she was working as an editor; unlike the rest of the people in our creative writing program, she didn't want to go into academia. When I applied for a position teaching creative writing as a Teaching Assistant at the university, she scoffed, informing me flatly I'd do better to pick up a few composition classes in Monterey, where I had friends who could get me classes, never mind the drive, since teaching composition would look better on my résumé and do more to prepare me for a career I could only look forward to—and here, with a self-satisfied smirk, she predicted a difficult transition into the working world after graduate school—as an adjunct.

Turning an Eye on Human Nature:
An Interview with Beverly Rayner

Beverly Rayner was born and raised Connecticut, but has been living in the San Francisco Bay Area for over 30 years. She has a BFA in sculpture and an MFA in photography from San Jose State University. She has had an extensive exhibition history spanning more than 25 years, and her work is in several museum collections. Beverly's rural New England roots reveal themselves in her love of the mysterious forms and rich surfaces of old, discarded objects, which she first encountered in barns where she grew up. In her mixed media artworks, she combines photographic images with all kinds of objects and materials in a great variety of ways, fusing them into entirely new, hybrid objects. She is currently teaching photography at Santa Clara University. To see more of her artwork, visit her website at: http://beverlyrayner.com

Santa Clara Review: What are some of your greatest sources of visual and conceptual inspiration?

Beverly Rayner: Human beings are my biggest inspiration. I like to explore human nature in my artwork. How we behave, how we project our individual little warp on reality onto what is in front of us, and how that colors our perceptions of what we see. How we relate to each other, how we relate to the world, and how we try to manipulate the world to change it into what we want it to be. I get a lot of great inspiration from listening to NPR, because there are stories about all kinds of aspects of human behavior. Reading, of course, listening to music lyrics, watching people live their lives.

All of those things feed me conceptually; that's where I get my ideas, and then they just percolate inside me until one pops up and asks to be dealt with.

SCR: That leads us into talking about how you make your art objects. Since you primarily use found objects, we wondered how and where you find all these things; do they find you, or do you go out and find them?

BR: It's both. Most of it has come from flea markets and junk shops, but for years and years and years people have just brought me things. And I've gotten to the point where my studio is so stacked, floor to cieling, that I tend to avoid the places where I can find things. I shop in my own studio now, and most of the time I can find what I need.

SCR: Now that we know a little about your human inspiration, how did the scientific aspect become involved in your artwork? The genetics, and the surveillance devices?

BR: Well, as a kid, I was really interested in insects and I wanted to be an entomologist. The artistic side of me wanted to be a dioramist, which is also sort of scientific. I've always been really interested in how things work, and in the minutia of things, both visually and conceptually. But the things that fascinate me about science are the ideas behind it. Like what we do with genetic manipulation, and what that means on a more conceptual level as far as being humans and the hubris of thinking we can do what we want with genetic codes, and changing genetics of living creatures. It makes me ask, what are the consequences of that? Because we have been known to be wrong before, as human beings in scientific pursuits. That kind of stuff interests me; the human folly of thinking we're so capable of doing these things and then perhaps a century later realizing how stupid we were. My interest in science comes from how we

mechanically try to control nature and the world we live in.

SCR: We also noticed that you use a lot of eye imagery. Does the eye symbolize something specific, or something less concrete?

BR: Well, I've always been interested in eyes and hands as symbols. But what you'll see is that the eye pieces are all about surveillance now. They are about being watched. I've done a whole lot of work about our certain need to watch ourselves and protect ourselves from the evil within or without, and what does all of that mean? We watch ourselves constantly, so we've lost our privacy in the process. A lot of these pieces are about the systems that have been set up for dissemination of information through the internet. It goes into the internet, and then the pieces of information hook up with each other and become a sort of living entity that's then accessed by all kinds of people. So it's like a living organism, and some of the pieces have this quality of being almost life forms.

SCR: Like it's all been turned around and now it's looking at us.

BR: Yes, exactly. It has a life of its own.

SCR: Are you working on anything new? It sounds like your surveillance stuff is where you're going at the moment.

BR: It is, I think I'm almost done with that, though. I am actually now working on more of the Museum of Mesmerism. I have a show coming up at the Triton Museum in 2013, and I don't know what I'll be doing for that, but I'm sure new things will come up. I have a list, really, this long, of ideas, so when I start on it, I'll look at that list and see what seems most interesting.

SCR: Now that you're teaching here at Santa Clara, what do you hope to bring to the SCU community?

BR: I'm teaching a digital photography class, which is just one little tip of the iceberg of what I do. I would love to dive in here and get involved, because I love the community here. I am friends with several of the faculty here, so that's really great. There is just such a good feel about this place, I really respect the University's philosophy and the art department has a really good vibe to it. So I would love to expand my possibilities here in the future, and twist people's minds who are looking down the straight photography path, to say, 'hey, you could do this with it, too. It doesn't have to be in a frame.'

SCR: If a new student came to you not sure of his or her direction, what would you say about how to start practicing art in a way that inspires them?

BR: I really like to talk in terms of the conceptual aspect of art. That's where the meat of it is; techniques are just the tool that let you get the job done. The brain is the tool that makes it all worthwhile and makes it mean something to somebody else; that's where the joy and the pain of it all lies. It's the struggle to communicate using something that's less tangible than numbers or words. Art is so open-ended. There are so many possibilities ways to express yourself, so to have a solid foundation you need to identify what you're thinking. What is it that you want to convey? The main thing is to think about what you're trying to express. Besides the nuts and bolts of getting the technical stuff, thinking about what art means is the best way to rope people in. There's such a beauty to it, and such a universal language in it.

SCR: Fiction writers and poets often say that inspiration comes so quickly that when it comes, it can be hard to capture that exact moment. Since art can take so long to create, what do you do to capture a moment when you are inspired?

BR: Because so much of it lives in my brain and then gets translated into a physical form, I need to write down what I'm thinking and save it for when I can work with it. I make notes of a concept or a title; sometimes it starts with just a few words that I hear and think, "That would make a great piece!" and suddenly I start to think about what I could do with it. I see which physical things I could use right off the bat, or how I might structure it. I have to make notations; it's all I can do to save the idea. Sometimes it translates directly into the artwork, and sometimes it mutates as I'm making it, and I'm fine with that. I just kind of follow that path that it takes me on.

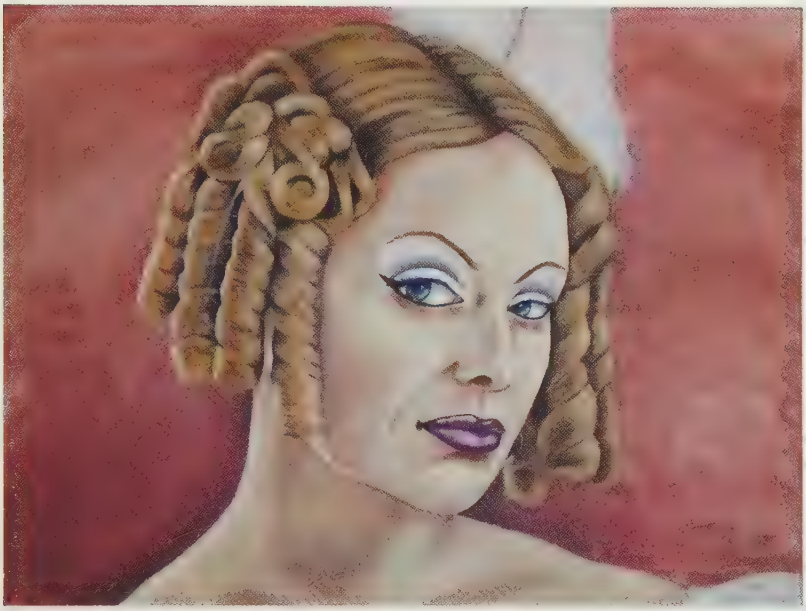
beverly rayner |
polyester housecoat (extended with fabric, thread and fasteners), 100 years of ephemera from a single family, metal and stone lamp stand, wooden hanger
5' x 12.5' x 20.5'

Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying—Typhoon Coming On (after JMW Turner)

contact this artist at:
mmelvin@scu.edu

mark melvin
oil on canvas
30" by 40"

A Romance Written in los Stars, Wey



armando portillo |
oil on canvas
24" by 30"

contact this artist at:
aportillo@scu.edu

Vastness

contact this artist at:
mreilly@scu.edu

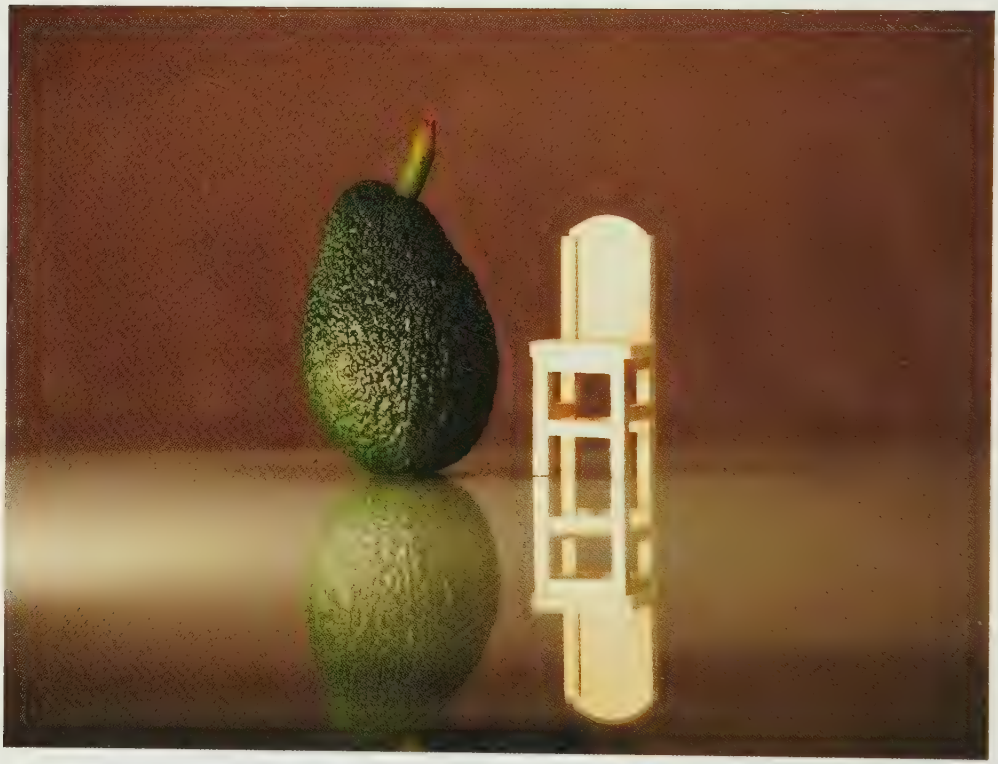
margot reilly
mixed media
6” by 10”

Bay Bridge

thanna rajapakse |
black and white photograph
5" by 7"

contact this artist at:
srimani89@gmail.com

The Interview



contact this artist at:
carolcollins.art@gmail.com

| carol collins
digital photograph
16" by 28"

The Chairs

hallie mcknight |
acrylic on canvas
16" by 20"

contact this artist at:
annamarieleon@aol.com

| annamarie leon
charcoal on BFK rives
22" by 30"

Summer Mourning

I tell Aimee August
is out of tune. Tonic

and major 7ths. Cicadas
drone and whine, keep

me from getting sleep
at 3 am. Snooze

alarm for summer. The dog-day rattle
wakes the toddler next door, her feet

cadence the wall at 4. The garbage
truck wails as though synthesized,

amplified. After 5, the scream

of traffic-cop sirens. Cat-birds clash
like steel strings, dropped D. I squint

over coffee. It's not out of tune,
Aimee says. That's rock-and-roll.

I've been collecting this to tell you

I.

On the drive north to the wedding,
bluegrass's mournful picking fades to static

as I drive into a high cloud's shadow
then out again. There's nothing now

to distract me, and so I list again
the reasons why we're finished. The highway curves,

and it feels good to turn the steering wheel
at just the right angle, to move farther

and farther away from you, the sun so bright
that my arm on the windowsill might burn.

II.

A storm came through, strong from eating
through empty prairie, the sky lit solid

by lightning. I could feel the thunder in my toes.
I turned off the lights, stood near the window—

though not supposed to—and watched,
the hotel parking lot a pock-marked river.

The rain frantic on the roof drowned out
that sarcastic turn your voice can take.

A tornado took off

roofs ten miles away.

I nearly wrote this down on hotel stationery—
but you have seen storms before

and do not need to know
I write these letters to you

in my head.

If I scribbled some note and put a stamp on it,
it wouldn't be true by the time it arrived.

III.

We gather here to witness, the minister says,
this man and this woman.

They're about to have their hearts sewn in, I think,
and push down the silly pathos

that says mine is still flapping about
on my sleeve. I hold you

in the bones of my jaw,
in the muscles
at the back of my neck which will not relax.

And so, vodka. And so, dancing.
White lights hang from the barn rafters,

and the couple dances their first song in blue jeans,

her left arm tucked under his right, her hand

reaching up his back to draw them close,
birds' wings.

Late in the night, black rings the women's eyes
as we sweat off makeup

which drew out our eyes so well
when we arrived.

IV.

A postcard:

Hello from Atlanta, Illinois, and the grain elevator museum—no joke. Here, you can follow corn's journey from seed to your cereal bowl. I stopped for kicks. Well, and my legs were sore from all the sitting. It felt good to breathe unventilated air. There's so much sky here that I feel a bit claustrophobic.

How are
I'm sorry about how

Oh, what does it matter

V.

You are more present in your absence,
in the scent of burnt coffee grounds,

in the sunwarmed fabric you are not wearing,
which is simply a jacket in the glare of the window.

I think of you in stairwells, in elevators,
in airplanes, when I stop moving.

I think of the way you pulled me into you
even when my arm was taut with resisting,

of the way you once stopped the loud bell
of a lid clanging on the counter

by clasping it to your chest
when a simple touch of the hand would have done.

VI.

I am tired of plastic wrappers, of packaging,
of the bag of crackers inside the box, and both
needing disposal, of each popsicle wrapped

in its plastic and becoming a stick to throw away.
I am tired of filling plastic bag after plastic bag with trash:
food gone bad, pieces of cotton that took off my makeup,

paper towels, pistachio shells, shiny piece of paper
from a new picture frame with strangers smiling.
I am tired of sorting bottle after bottle,

of emptying things and then letting them go
out of my sight, god knows where.
I am tired of these letters, too. Of all the waste.

VII.

But I do love a letter folded so that it becomes
its own envelope, space saved by crossing lines
up through others, the page a mesh of letters.

Since I cannot speak to you, as valediction, all tucked together,
the final few things:

> The electric poles all look like stilled dancers.
> A green tractor kicks up a dust cloud that drifts past
> the blown-out carcass of a tire.
> Two birds burst across the highway in play,
> as I drive home, but not to you.

Cabin Fever

The old homestead cabin had leaned against the sky for as long as Dan Horn could remember. But now, thanks to Gil Moyle, it stood upright again. Stiff as a Baptist minister, starched collar and stick up the ass, ready to weather another hundred years of whatever man and God threw at it—providing the world itself held out that long.

Horn's entire history was tied up in the crookedness of the cabin. But with Moyle having propped it up into the sort of respectability that could only be got by way of a plumb line, level, and carpenter's square, the world he'd once known had tipped off its axis, horizon teetering up on one end, his life and everything he'd ever loved sliding down the other, off into the blue.

Still, he wanted it back. He wanted it back the way he wanted his youth back. The way he wanted the lost years of his life back. And he was ready to shell out the jack for it, cash on the barrelhead, just like he'd said in his letter.

He rested his arms on the barbed wire fence and spat into the grass, checking the road for the knot of dust that would announce the coming of Moyle's truck. He hadn't seen Gil Moyle in thirty years, and he would have been content had that number multiplied out into the thousands. But there was no point in bitching anymore. Life dealt you the hand it dealt you, and all you could do was play it.

He scratched his ear and stared at the sheep milling around the cabin's front door. At least that much hadn't changed. The little log house might have been wrong, but at least the rest of the place was the way he'd left it. Reaching for the store boughts he'd quit smoking five years ago and finding his pocket empty, he let go a wistful sigh and went on waiting.

The dirt between him and Moyle would never go away. This was understood by both parties. But if sentiment was his particular weakness, money was Moyle's, and this gave them ample incentive to hammer out a settlement. One that would permit each man to latch onto the thing he wanted most, yet still provide enough leeway that he could go on despising the other from a comfortable distance.

Dark clouds pass, Horn told himself. *Blue heavens abide.*

In a little while a cloud of dust boiled in the distance, moving along the wagon-rutted range like a lit fuse looking for a powder keg. Horn spied it through a pair of squinting, sun-smarting eyes and straightened up, shifting his weight from one boot to another. Then, so as not to give Gil the satisfaction of catching him in the act of rubber necking, he turned his eyes back to the cabin.

The three-room log house had stood here (or leaned, as the case was) on the mountain for as long as Horn could remember. His granddad had built the place at the turn of the previous century and lived in it right up to the time he went into the veteran's home in Arizona. It was built of good straight Lodgepole pine, cured six months in troughs of linseed oil, and had been set true on a foundation of red Wyoming granite. Still, within a year of its construction, it had begun to list, set-to on a drunken tilt by a combination of devil winds and Wyoming's infamous gumbo soil—bentonite as slick and shifty as a lawyer in a four-in-hand necktie.

Horn's granddad, unlike Gil Moyle, hadn't minded the cabin's deformity. Once tilted, the old man never saw fit to right it. Instead he got philosophic, saying that from a distance *it gave off a perspective worthy of consideration.*

Horn had a scalloped picture of his granddad in his wallet. It was taken before the horseback accident that had crippled the old man, leaving his left leg shorter than his right, and as crooked as the cabin itself. In this photograph, the old man (who wasn't an old man then, but a strapping young bull aged thirty or so) is shirtless, a pair of black braces holding up his rolled trousers. He wears

black brogans on his feet and his fists are laced up in boxing gloves the size of feedbags. The left hand is tucked squarely under his chin, the right angling for the breadbasket of a crouching Basque sheepherder who goes by the name of Johnny Madrid—or so says the dubious ink scrawl on the photograph's backside—while an audience of raggedy-looking ranch hands looks on, cheering.

"You was one tough sumbitch," Horn mumbled, talking to the old man's memory, which had been lingering about all day. "One tough sumbitch for sure."

The old man had been in his fifties when the horse toppled over on him, busting up his leg like it was fireplace kindling. He used to joke about the accident, but Horn knew it had nearly killed him and that the real laugh had been on Death itself, whose clutches he'd escaped through dumb luck and an unwillingness to go gently into that good night. Sometimes while thumping through the cabin in his wool socks, his granddad would stop what he was doing and look at the tilted reflection of himself in the mirror and bust out in a whisky-bar laugh and boast that the fall had left him one part human, one part Sidehill Hodang. A creature whose uneven legs made tramping around a mountain as natural as the Texas two-step, shorter leg on the inside of the trail always keeping things even-steven.

When Moyle's vehicle turned off the dirt road and clacked along over the loose rocks up through the scraggly wheatgrass toward the fence line, Horn stayed where he was, pretending not to notice. The vehicle rolled to a stop behind him, engine whining, pistons thrumming, and once shut down, chugged a few times and died, the air afterward ticking with the sound of hoppers jumping in the sun.

This was it. The worst of it, he told himself. Once they got past the sharpie handshakes and not-so-furtive sizing up of one other's broken down bodies—each trying to gauge who'd gotten the worst of the last thirty years while both knowing it was Horn—

they could get on with business.

A door creaked open, and boots hit the ground. But the voice that followed on their heels was not the one he'd been expecting.

"Dan?"

Despite himself—or rather, despite his hope of appearing unshakable—Horn swung round at the familiar utterance of his name, and when he did his face went as gray and pale as a rain cloud.

The first thing that struck him was the car. Its yellow hood shining like an egg yolk in the sun. The second was the woman standing beside it, smiling like a billboard.

"Brenda?"

She beamed. "Dan Horn?"

Brenda Moyle was a small woman, slim and muscular with a bun of silver hair punched up under a fancy, broad-brimmed straw hat. She wore tight-fitting cords that made her look like a woman half her age, and she gave off the clear impression she was not only used to being noticed, but admired.

It was her, all right, though it took a moment for Horn's mind and eyes to come to agreement on the matter.

"Well, don't just stand there like some goddamned orphan," she squealed, throwing open her arms. "Git over her and git hugged on."

Horn stood there, the past screaming up inside him like wind through a canyon. Feelings swirling and scattering in a bedeviled mess. For a moment he thought he might keel over of a heart attack—just like his granddad had done in that soldiers home down in Tucson—but when his nerves settled, he was still there. Breathing.

She closed the door and leaned against the car's polished quarter panel, looking nothing like the girl he'd fallen in love with and married all those long years ago. The smile was the same. It hadn't lost a smidgen of wattage. But the rest—the belt with the silver conches, the high-dollar snakeskin boots, the fancy makeup—

it made her look as if she'd spent her days arranging flowers in the drawing room and balancing teacups on her knees at the ladies' society.

Horn tried to move, but his boots had turned to stone. No matter. Brenda, never one to wait, seized the advantage. "I had to see you Dan," she said, stomping over and throwing her arms around him, a lariat of perfume cinching down around his shoulders. "I just *had* to. I know you're probly still mad at me, but damnit, we're too old now for grudges."

Horn had never considered there might be a timetable attached to the lifespan of festering resentments. And while happy for Brenda that her personal misgivings had been laid to rest, he still felt entitled to his own grudges, old and cobwebbed, or not. Especially since he hadn't been as fortunate as her and Gil, who were stocked up good on the one true salve for any ailment God or man threw in your path: money.

He scratched for something to say, but couldn't find the words. The only thing that came out of his stupefied mouth was, "I was expectin *Gil*."

She released him from the ropelike grip of her arms and clamped her hands on her hips, giving him a good up and down with her cold blue eyes. "Well," she said, going remotely sad at the sight of him. "You got me instead. What do you think about that?"

He didn't know what to say, exactly. She'd been his wife less than three months when she ran off with Moyle, and his eyes still stung when he recalled the day he'd come home and found the note on top of the icebox saying she'd pulled out. That she loved him—*would always love him*—but that Gil could do for her in ways that he'd never be able.

His eyes returned to the cabin. He looked at the graying timbers with a banker's remorse, tallying up all he'd lost in the break up. His granddad had liked Brenda. Gotten on well with her, in fact. But he'd have tied Horn to a post and hidestrapped him if he'd ever found out he'd lost the spread over a piece of ass. That

was the only good thing about the old man's dying like he did. Better the blood clot got him than bad news about his ranch.

"Don't mean to be unneighborly," he said now with a pained squint. "But I got some engagements in town. If Gil's gonna be a spell—"

She stopped him with a smile and a sad little shake of the head. "What's your hurry, Dan? It's been thirty years. Anything wrong with killin a little time together? Days move fast enough without our chasin em along."

He said nothing.

She moved in beside him, comfortable as ever, and gazed out at the white teeth of the Absaroka, hazy in the distance. "Pretty view." She paused, thoughtfully. Head angled so he couldn't see her face. "World treatin you all right?"

He closed his eyes against a bitter-tasting lie. "Cain't complain." When she turned to him, he forced a half-baked smile. "Still kickin anyways."

She lowered her eyes a little and offered a nod at the frayed cuff on his pearl-buttoned shirt.

"They got somethin can fix that you know."

"Oh, yeah?" He spoke out of politeness more than anything else, pretending to give the damage proper consideration.

"Yeah," she said. "It's called a *wife*."

His face puckered. The lines in his forehead bent as if under a toilsome weight. "Yeah, well." He cleared his throat. "Had me one a those once. They ain't all that reliable."

Horn had been boots over buckles in love with Brenda, and her unexpected leaving had dealt him a blow from which he'd never recovered. He'd never blamed her for running off with Gil—Moyle had money enough to turn any girl's head—but he did blame her for being greedy, and for helping to see to it he lost the deed to the land and the cabin in the divorce settlement.

"See Gil done some work on the place." He raised his chin.

"Little bit."

"Yup."

He nodded, dragging his eyes from the atrocity without saying more, and lifted a weary finger in the direction of the car. "Nice lookin buggy. You done all right for yerself."

Brenda glanced at the yellow vehicle, smiled from under the mottled shade of her straw hat and, as if she hadn't ever thought of it quite that way, said, "Gil's good at makin money."

Horn snorted. *Tell me somethin I don't know*, he thought, remembering how he'd had his eyes opened to Gil's moneymaking talents first hand, back when he'd had his property snatched out from under him in that courtroom in Casper. It was like, for a while, he had a hole in his pocket, and the best parts of his life just kept falling through it into Gil's greedy mitts.

They stood there a while, him and Brenda, neither saying a word. And in the silence that passed between them Horn became aware of the sun. The heat crawling up his skin like a snake. He wished, vaguely, that Gil would come along, ridiculous as that sounded, and save him from himself. But the mountain was quiet. The wagon road deserted.

"Come on," Brenda said, putting her hand over his arm. "Let's us go have a look. I expect you'd like to see the place up close again."

Horn offered no objection. There were gates on the property now. Barbed wire where none had ever been before. And if the inhospitable fence-work didn't give you a clear enough picture of who you were dealing with, all you had to do was take a good gander at the asinine "grave" Gil had erected near the main gate. A stony cairn fashioned out of river rock, dressed up with a wooden headstone whose epitaph read: THE LORD FORGIVES TRESPASSERS, BUT GIL MOYLE DON'T.

Horn eyed the weathered old Tony Lamas poking out from the bottom of the rock heap like the tattered carcass of some long-dead animal, toes (or what was left of them, anyway) pointing toward Paradise. He might have wished it was Gil under that

mound of stone, but he knew all too well the difference between God's Plans and his own. Sooner or later, everybody got what was coming to him.

Brenda opened the gate, and Horn followed her in, closing it afterward by hitching the wire loop over the main post.

"How's Cripple Creek?"

He slid a suspicious glance her way, but said nothing.

"I seen the postmark."

He looked ahead to the scattering woolies, hooves clacking on the stones, coats smeared with dust and sheep shit, and though he figured she didn't really give a good goddamn, he told her *exactly* how it was. "It ain't Vegas, darlin."

She glanced away, toward the mountains. Smiling, vaguely. Or maybe it just seemed that way.

"Nothing wrong workin for a gamin operation—if that's what you're doin, Dan. Junior college in Casper teaches classes in it. Talk about how it's a real good career. "

Horn had nothing to say to that either.

"Has to be better'n buckin bales," she threw in. "Don't it?"

He grumbled, suppressing a remark he knew she wouldn't have taken kindly, given the charitable nature of the inquiry. But he'd loved ranching. It was in his blood, and when it wasn't his to do with anymore, he'd gone anemic from the loss of it. The cancer wasn't killing him, he'd liked to have said to her. The past was.

They walked along through the grass and stones. Brenda stopped in front of the cabin and released his arm. Standing in the shade of the log wall, she raised her hand to her hatbrim and said, "So, what is it, Dan? What brings you back here after all this time?"

"This here's my home."

She lowered her hand. "It stopped bein your home thirty years ago."

"I never intended to part with it."

"But you did."

He nodded his tacit agreement at the outward reasonableness

of the statement. "Parted with a lot of things, Brenda. Only thing was, I wasn't given no selection in the matter." He narrowed his eyes. Looked past her shoulder and pointed to an outcrop of red rock near a twisted patch of sage. At the foot of the stone, a swath of lush green grass spread out like a stain across the ground. "Spring's still runnin, I see."

"Yeah."

"Good."

The feelings that had lain sleeping inside him for three decades had come awake again. First with a yawn, then with a startled, snuffling grunt, and finally, with a flash of teeth. He'd worked in the casinos for twenty years socking away what cash he could to buy the place back, and he wasn't in the mood to talk about it anymore. He only wanted to settle up. Reclaim the deed then live out his days in peace. As close to his granddad's memory as time and circumstance would allow.

"Well," he said. "May as well quit beatin around the bush. I expect Gil told you what I'm after. I want my cabin back. That's as straightforward as I can make it. I got cash and I wanna talk turkey." He looked down, scraping at the dust with the edge of his boot. "You all can git rich off me twice, I reckon. That's just how much of a fool I am."

Brenda didn't sigh, exactly, when he said this. But the look on her face suggested she might, if given the proper encouragement. She removed her hat and her hair tumbled to her shoulders, spilling down in cool silver waves. She laid the hat on the weather-beaten bench outside the door, then raised her face to the clouds and closed her eyes. "You know, Dan," she said in something close to a whisper, "Gil don't care for you."

Horn nodded, figuring fair enough. He didn't care for Gil, either. But that didn't have any bearing on the deal he was fixing to make. "What'll he take for it?" he said, running his hand over the weatherworn logs. "Got any idea?"

He stepped up through the door and looked at the rafters

where the roof had had been repaired. New ribs of Lodgepole pine. New shingles.

"He don't talk business with me, Dan," she said, stepping into the cabin behind him, the expensive straw hat she'd been wearing now dangling from her painted fingers. "He's a regular cigar-store Indian when it comes to money."

Horn wasn't listening.

Aside from the effort of straightening the walls, Gil hadn't sunk much work or money into the place, and for that he was grateful. The fewer the improvements, the fewer the reasons to haggle. "Cain't be worth more'n a few thousand—tops," he said, bending to look out the window that faced north toward Tensleep. "An that's bein generous. But I'll give em whatever he thinks is fair."

"He don't trust you, neither, Dan."

"Don't trust me?" Horn raised up and turned to her, head cocked curiously to one side.

"No."

Though insulted, Horn was also mildly flattered. Most people up here took him for simple—especially after he'd found himself hoodwinked out of what had been the jewel in his granddad's thorny crown.

"Never had but one dealin with the man," he said, "and that was thirty years ago." He removed his hat and passed his hand over his tin-colored hair. "Far as I remember, he come out on top."

Brenda approached him now, her boots raising groans from the floorboards. She put her hand back on his arm. "Gil thinks you know something about this cabin he don't. He thinks cause you want it there must be something about it worth ownin."

"There ain't nothin to this cabin but memories, Brenda."

"I know that. But Gil don't. That's why he's being such a tough old nut about it."

Horn turned, puzzled at her choice of words.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, he ain't gonna sell this place. Not now, not ever."

The world stopped when she said this. Pulled up and stood there, huffing like a man who'd run up against a brick wall. He knew he couldn't of heard her right because Gil had told him otherwise. That they'd work a deal.

He pulled out her husband's letter and fanned the air with it. It had been folded in two, and was flattened and wrinkled from riding in his hip pocket. "That ain't what this here says."

Brenda looked away, shyly. "He didn't write that, Dan."

"What do you mean, he didn't write it?"

"I mean he didn't *write* it."

"Then who did?"

"Me."

He stood there, wordless. Emptied of anything to say. Of all the cruel deceptions Brenda had ever played on him, this might have chalked itself up as the worst. But he bit back his anger. Plugging his fists into his pockets and letting his eyes fall to the dirt, he curled back his lips and asked her why.

"Cause I wanted to see you again."

"What for?"

"Old times sake."

Horn hunched his shoulders like a man standing in a bitter rain. "Only old times I'm interested in is the ones you never wanted. Ones that got to do with that there cabin." He nudged his chin in the direction of the log edifice. "I need to talk to Gil, Brenda. This here's man's discussion. I come a long way to make a offer on the place, and you ain't in no position to bargain with me."

"Everything that's *his is mine*."

Not quite, Horn thought, giving her hell in a glance. *Not quite. Courts'll set you straight on that real quick, darlin. Believe you me.*

He stared at her fancy clothes, the well-tended look of her face and skin. The way she carried herself. She wasn't the helpless little cub he'd fawned over and lost all those years ago. She'd grown teeth and claws.

"I come here to deal, Brenda."

"Me, too, Dan."

If it hadn't cost him his job and two days travel to get here, he'd have tipped his hat, climbed back into his pickup and told her to go to hell. But he was stuck. Stuck with the sight of the old man's cabin, reformed, and stuck with her, his one-time wife, who was looking at him now with the same hungry eyes she'd brought to their wedding bed.

"This here ain't no game, Brenda. There ain't gonna be no second go-round for me. I'm down to the clothes on my back and the change in my pocket." He didn't tell her about the sickness. He would have died before he did that. All he wanted was a fair shake on the property, and a chance to live out the rest of his days in quietude. "I want the cabin back, Brenda. That's the long and short of it. I got no mind for anythin else."

Brenda said nothing. She just stared at him.

"I never had the guts to tell the old man I lost you and the cabin both," he said, chinking in the gap of silence between them with the last bit of personal information he was willing to part with. "He died down there in Arizona, not knowing. I reckon he thought things was safe in my hands."

The difficulty of this admission nearly undid him. The confession, a long time in coming, snaked back and bit him in the heart, leaving his eyes welling in their sockets. He raised his fist to his mouth and coughed, trying to disguise the break in his voice, then lowered his head and bit hard against his lip.

Brenda turned away and brought the straw hat to her bosom, clutching it with both hands. "Gil never seen the letter you sent, Dan. I took it from the postbox and never showed it to him. But I talked to him on my own after I read it. I asked him flat out to give it up. Sell it to you. But he said no."

"Why?"

She came flat out with it. "Cause he knows I don't love him no more."

Horn's lips parted, but no word passed them.

Brenda looked up, taking a step forward, reaching for his hand. But he edged away before their fingers could touch. "Truth is, I ain't sure I ever loved him, Dan. I ain't sure I didn't make the mistake of my life walkin out on you. Told him so, too. That's part a why he won't let go a the place."

Horn stood fixed, unable to move. Unable to talk. He looked at the plank floor under his boots, then up at the woman who'd once been his wife. The girl who'd turned her back on him for what he didn't have, and who'd now returned for what she'd thrown away. He felt sick. Dizzy. And a flame in his guts worked its way through his veins, setting fire to his brain.

"Dan?"

He turned his back to her, eyes escaping through the window, to the mountains, his mind filling with a delirious rage.

"Dan, I'm sorry. Sorry for everything."

He couldn't speak. He couldn't think. He could only stand there.

"Dan? Won't you talk to me? Please?"

She tugged at his sleeve, but it did no good. He was out of his head with fever. He understood, now, what his grandfather had suffered after breaking his leg, coming up short in a bad fall. He knew what it felt like to be maimed. Whittled down by something that was smaller than you, and left to live with the humiliating deformities it had caused. If he'd inherited the old man's grit along with his blood, he would have driven into town this very moment and called Gil Moyle out. Busted him up for what he'd done. He'd have drug him up here by his short hairs, and banged his fat head against the cabin wall until it was crooked again. Until history was back on the side it belonged.

Acnestis

n. — on an animal, the point of the back that lies between the shoulders and the lower back, which cannot be reached to be scratched

Driving alone, looking for my childhood
home, I always seem to be one street
off, thought it was on Chester
Avenue or Baker Street, but every road
looks familiar, like friends' faces

in dreams: you know who they are,
but not why. I lived in that house until
third grade, the year I sat next to the girl
who wore her hair in pigtails, an ordinary

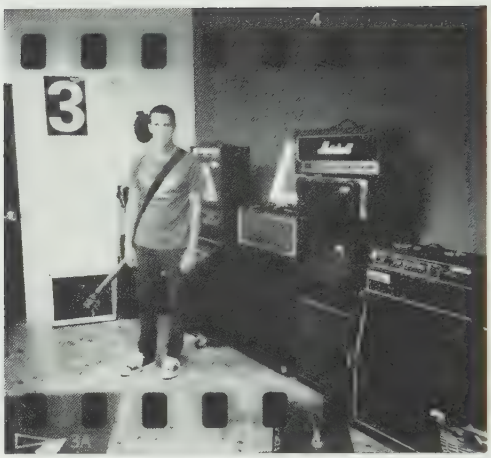
last name—Smith or Johnson—but I
am unable to hold it, moves along
the margins of memory. A song
you used to sing is mired in my mind,
says "something something daydream

in the something something clouds,"
but the rhythm is off, often was, as I
could not find the word you needed

to hear, though it rolled around
and around in my mouth for months;
I even lick my lips now, wondering

if it has somehow spilled out, but all
I find is a trace of your peach
lipstick that will not wear away.

Peat Moss



Peter Miller, otherwise known by his musical persona, "Peat Moss", started playing music in 8th grade when his two best friends told him he should learn to play the drums in order for them to start a band. Peter told his father he wanted to learn but after a while, forgot about the idea altogether only to find a pair of drumsticks underneath the tree the following Christmas. The rest is history for Peter; Sports were not his forte, so he put all his time into music and really fell in love with it.

He and his friends formed a band and began practicing every day. The group played shows most weekends and before long had a nice little fan base. Peter's best friend Riley taught him to play guitar in the most unconventional way possible and to this day Peter still thanks him for that. It taught him to use his imagination more instead of scouring the internet for answers. Peter has virtually no formal training on either drums or guitar but learning them came naturally to him. Now singing? That's a whole other story...

Peat Moss loves music and it loves him back. "I'll never stop playing it so long as it treats my soul so nice" he says.

Only Living Boy

Only Living Boy eats raw hearts for breakfast. Fueled by life's stunning brokenness, the band offers an authentic and poignant experience through a distinct rock sound. The trio's unrivaled style is a combination of 70s vinyl inherited from their parents and the alternative rock of their own MTV adolescence, rounded out with bits of jam, blues, reggae and punk. Thanks to their hometown's suspension between Pennsylvanian woods and New York City concrete, Only Living Boy's Northwest New Jersey roots help define its sound and attitude—organic with an edge.

In 2008 the band - seemingly as a right of passage – found that not everyone in the music industry has their best interests in mind. After much heartache, disbelief and lawyer's bills the band surged forward to reinvent itself as Only Living Boy, named after Paul Simon's "Only Living Boy in New York." The change represented a significant shift in attitude, songwriting and musicianship. With newfound motivation and an evolved sound, Only Living Boy immediately recorded its insightful and provocative self-titled debut, which was released on Wurli Records in August 2008. The album saw national attention through reviews, interviews and airplay on large market terrestrial as well as online radio.

Throughout two years of constant national touring (200 shows/year) the band has developed a ravenous, grass roots fan-base that continues to grow with each and every show. With the recent release of the "Double A Side Digital Single – Worthless/Homesick", the road "chops" of a band twice their age and the songwriting prowess that only comes from real experience, 2011 promises to be a breakout year for "OLB".

The band will be releasing a 7" vinyl single in late march and embarking on a national tour in June to promote the release of their follow up LP "Hide Nothing". "Hide Nothing" was recorded and produced by Paul Ritchie, guitarist/song writer for Jersey shore based rock band The Parlor Mob (Road Runner Records).

Revolution of the Mind

If revolution had a soundtrack, what would that sound be? A duo of devoted artists/activists from the West Coast may have the answer. Revolution of the Mind depicts through its music, vivid imagery and accounts of the turmoil that shapes politics and society throughout the world.

ROTM's Iranian-born, California-raised front man I.Sheik reflects the realities of revolution and exile through powerful and refined lyricism. The child of an influential activist and freedom-fighter, politics have always surrounded Sheik in his daily life. This was part of what led Sheik to form an early emotional bond with hip hop. Though he had long been captivated by acts such as Grandmaster Flash, Run DMC and Whodini, his philosophical maturation increasingly drew him towards artists like Public Enemy, Ice Cube, and Tupac.

During this same period, a few hundred miles south in Los Angeles, DJ Dfi was putting in work to learn the fine art of crate-digging, using timeless soul, jazz, funk, rock and early hip-hop records to slowly mold his own musical identity. Dfi also immersed himself in the burgeoning turntablist movement of 1990s. His musical training and appreciation of music history also combined to make Dfi a formidable producer.

Dfi and Sheik met in the Bay Area in the early 2000s and began making music together. As they transferred their collective skills into the recording studio, the duo formed ROTM and began performing at local clubs and festivals. Since then, they have performed with the likes of the Wu-Tang Clan, Dead Prez, Jedi Mind Tricks, Psycho Realm, The Beatnuts and many others.

"We're not trying to be a watered-down version of anybody, or recreate anybody's sound. We're trying to make our own mark," Sheik says. "The diversity of the artists that we're working with on this project, and the complex set of influences that (Dfi) and I both have, put us in a position to make real distinctive music. And if you're truly about hip-hop, that's what it has to be about: exploring new formulas and helping – sometimes forcing – the culture to expand." In the days immediately following the 2009 uprising in Iran in response to the protested presidential election, Sheik chimed in by creating a song entitled "D.O.A. (Death Of the Ayatollahs)", a remix of Jay-Z's "D.O.A. (Death Of Autotune)". The timely song was featured on some of the hip-hop blogosphere's most prominent sites, as well as that of actor/comedian Maz Jobrani.

ROTM's new album "Honor in Sin" features appearances and production from Sabac Red, Outerspace, Reef The Lost Cauze, Keelay & Zaire, SickNature and more.

Young Prisms

If 'slacker' means 'purveyor of angst-ridden badass psychedelic rock,' then the Young Prisms qualify. Four such slackers comprise this band: Jordan Silbert, Matt Allen, Stef Hodapp, and Gio Betteo. Silbert is the old man, at twenty-four, and all recently dropped out of various unsatisfying academic situations.

What they did instead is they moved into a roach infested apartment above a Chinese restaurant in San Francisco's Mission District and started pumping out dark, driving rhythms overlaid with melodies that pulse and build and then break over you. Out of this small dwelling, the five members shared a living, practicing and recording space and held séances in hopes of invoking the Mission District's legendary artistic spirits. The result, some of the best stuff coming out of a city exploding with brilliant new music, and more concretely a debut LP, "Friends For Now".

The group's lyrics, which you'll have to do your best to decipher, are laced with a kind of nonchalance that devolves quickly into a grim, passionate poetry part My Bloody Valentine, part Sonic Youth, part Charles Bukowski, part some kind of sparkly ecstasy that cannot be categorized.

Young Prisms debut full-length album 'Friends For Now' is out January 18th on the Kanine label. For self-proclaimed slackers, Young Prisms has kept busy having released an EP on Mexican Summer in late 2009 (sold out), followed by split 7 inches with former roomies Weekend (Transparent UK), Small Black (Big Love JP), and Mathamagic (Atelier Ciseaux FR) in 2010.

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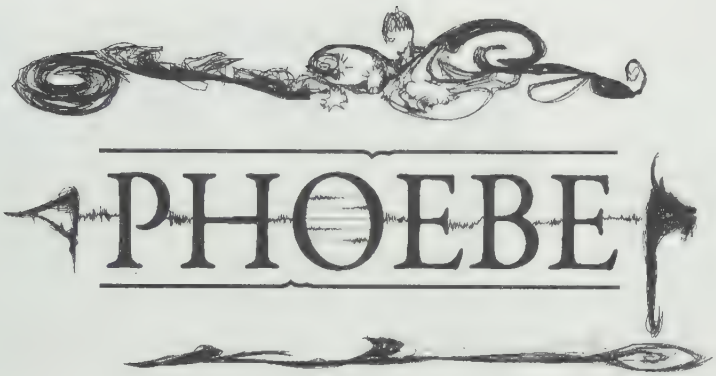

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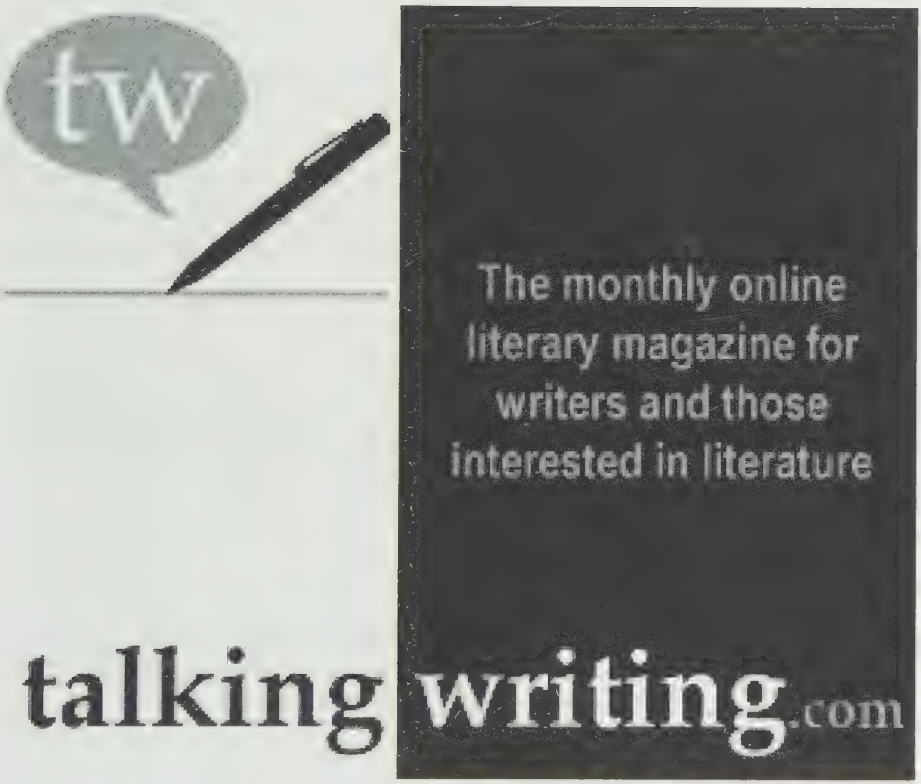
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Contributors' Notes

ainsley kelly is a junior English major and Religious Studies minor at Santa Clara University. She was awarded the Shipsey Poetry Prize in 2010. Her work is concerned with the barriers and connections inherent in all relationships.

alejandra germann is a junior, studying Art and Art History at Santa Clara University. She loves to paint and dabbles in digital photography. She also plans on eventually becoming an art teacher.

annamarie leon is a senior studio art and art history double major at Santa Clara University. Her current work explores the restrictive nature of fear and insecurity and the physical manifestations of these negative emotions.

ariana rodriguez is a Bay Area native majoring in Studio Art at Santa Clara University, with concentrations in photography and painting. She enjoys listening to music, being outdoors and taking road trips. One of her photographs is currently on display at a SCU student exhibit called, "Reflections on Sustainability."

armando portillo is a senior at Santa Clara University and will graduate as a Studio Art major with a minor in Latin American Studies. His current work focuses on portraiture and the figure, whether it be in drawing, painting, or ceramic sculpture.

beverly rayner has an MFA in photography from San Jose State University. Her work has been shown in numerous exhibitions at galleries and museums and is the collections of several museums. She is currently teaching photography at Santa Clara University.

camille richter is a Senior at Santa Clara University.

carol collins escaped her high-tech management job for an undergraduate studio art education at SCU. She loves kung fu, good food, travel, and pursuing her dream to make the world better through art.

charlotta kratz is a lecturer in the Department of Communication at Santa Clara University. More info here: www.charlottakratz.com

charlotte allen is a senior Studio Art major/Art History minor working with an emphasis in painting. She has focused a lot on landscapes and skyscapes as subjects in her paintings but has recently moved towards more figural scenes. Her senior art show is coming up in May which will be a combination of skyscapes and architecture oil paintings.

chelsea henshey is a student at West Virginia University. This is her first publication.

deborah gold is the pseudonym of a teacher, writer, and foster parent.

donna hunt is a 2010 Pushcart nominee, and her chapbook The Coastline of Antarctica is forthcoming this summer from Finishing Line Press. She lives and works in Brooklyn, NY, and has a poetry podcast available from iTunes.

doug margeson is a former newspaper reporter in Seattle. Margeson has won 184 regional and 28 national journalism awards. His fiction has been published in The Chaffin Journal and The MacGuffin. His essays have been published in The Palo Alto Review.

elijah jennett is a self-taught stencil artist. Commissions gratefully accepted.

hallie mcknight is a sophomore at Santa Clara University studying Studio Art and English. Her work has been featured in juried shows around Northern California, including the California State Fair. This is her first appearance in the Santa Clara Review.

jessica poli graduated from the University of Pittsburgh and currently lives in Ligonier, PA. Her work is forthcoming in Pitt's literary magazine, Collision.

kevin brown is an Associate Professor at Lee University. His poems have appeared in The New York Quarterly, REAL, Folio, Connecticut Review, South Carolina Review, Stickman Review, among other journals. He has one book of poetry, Exit Lines, and one chapbook, Abecedarium.

lisa ampleman, a University of Cincinnati PhD student, is the author of I've Been Collecting This to Tell You, winner of the 2010 Wick Chapbook competition. Her poems have appeared in journals including Forklift, Ohio; Notre Dame Review; and Court Green.

maddie sears is a traveler, an advocate for social justice, and lover of all things beautiful in the world. Thank you to SCCAP, the people of India and South Africa, and all my wonderful friends and family for constantly inspiring me.

marc foster was born in New York City in 1962. His short fiction has appeared in Hunger Mountain. Marc lives with the public health researcher Andrea Roberts and their two children. He serves on the board of 826 Boston.

margot reilly is a sophomore in the Individual Studies program with a major in Socioeconomic Development and International Communications and a Studio Art minor. Her piece is from a mixed media class in which she created a collection made from organic materials and found objects. Nautical charts and aged wood were common threads amongst the pieces created throughout the quarter

mark fitzgerald, who teaches writing at the University of Maryland, is the author of By Way of Dust and Rain, a collection of poems. His work has appeared in the Crab Creek Review, Squaw Review, Temenos and other literary journals.

mark melvin is pursuing a Studio Arts Major at Santa Clara University. He was born on the west coast, and then moved to Illinois where he grew up. He felt compelled to return and see what he missed.

marty saunders is a graduating senior at SCU. He is a poet, a student of human geography, and an eternal wanderer.

melina alexa ramirez is a Studio Art Major and Religious Studies minor of the class of 2012. Her work calls into question eurocentric standards of beauty and worth with symbolism, historical and contemporary references, and humor.

robert mcguill is a Pushcart Prize nominee and Glimmertrain Stories finalist whose fiction has appeared in the Southwest Review, the MacGuffin, the South Dakota Review, Talking River, The Baltimore Review and other literary publications. He lives and writes in Colorado.

taylor rulon-miller is a double major in art history and studio art at Santa Clara University. She works with many mediums of art including mixed media, charcoals, ceramics, photography (film &digital).

thanna rajapakse is a Biology/ Individual Studies Major, Class of 2011. Her photo was taken as part of the sustainability project for Black & White Photography course in winter 2011 with Renee Billingslea. The photo was taken at a wildlife refuge in Jarvis Landing; the bridge overlooks the San Francisco bay.

tom andes' fiction, poetry, and criticism has most recently appeared in News from the Republic of Letters, The Rumpus, and 3:AM Magazine. At present, he divides his time between Fayetteville, Arkansas and the San Francisco Bay Area.

veronica garcia is a junior attending Santa Clara University majoring in studio art and communications. She is a fine art digital photographer who gains ongoing inspiration from her dreams and enjoys creating new worlds through the lens of her camera.

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